



DOCTOR OF EDUCATION (EDD)

To what degree are market-based international schools offering the IB Diploma Programme providing a Good Education?

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**To what degree are market-based international schools offering the
IB Diploma Programme providing a *Good Education*?**

Volume 1 of 1

Lorne Douglas Bird

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Education

University of Bath

Department of Education

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ABSTRACT

The research literature speaks to the negative implications that have come as a result of the marketisation of education through neoliberal educational reform, from what has come to be valued as knowledge, to the pedagogy employed. Ultimately, what it means to become a well-educated person, and by extension, what it means to become a person, has fundamentally changed (Ball, Biesta, Carpenter, Weber, & Schugurensky, 2012; Connell, 2013; Kelly, 2006). While the negative implications emerged during neoliberal educational reform, this is not proof that the marketisation of education is inevitably problematic. It could be the case that market-based schools can provide a quality education while meeting the goal of accountability desired by neoliberalism. In this regard, there is a gap in the research literature, with this thesis therefore investigating the degree to which market-based international schools offering the IB Diploma Programme offer a quality education, using Biesta's criteria for a *good education*. The research design first establishes the degree to which the IBDP represents a *good education* in its theoretical design. Thereafter, it investigates the degree to which the IBDP provides accountability for the quality of its education, as well as the degree to which the negative implications as seen in neoliberally framed educational settings are present. Finally, the degree to which the IBDP actually realises a *good education* in practise is evaluated, with the focus grounded in the degree to which Biesta's criteria of *subjectification* is realised in IBDP schools. Findings show that the IBDP has a clear potential to realise a *good education* in design. While the findings show that there are ways in which *subjectification* is realised in practise, an almost exclusive reliance on standardised exam-based metrics of academic success effectively crowds out the key elements of the IBDP that could generate *subjectification*. Unfortunately, the systems of accountability employed by IBDP lead to an undervaluation of its core elements, which translates into an underproduction of *subjectification*, ultimately representing a market failure of the IBDP. Moreover, the IBDP's neoliberally based marketing strategies, aimed at actively promoting its growth globally, further fuel the valuation of exam-based metrics of academic stress, creating an echo-chamber as IBDP schools and universities reinforce the IBDP's narrative equating standardised exam-based metrics of performance with the quality of education produced, further entrenching the market failure. This thesis suggests further investigations into values-based systems of accountability, such as those seen in non-profit organizations, as a way forward for the IBDP to realise a *good education*.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATL	Approaches to Learning
CAS	Creativity, Action, & Service
EE	Extended Essay
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IB	International Baccalaureate
IBO	International Baccalaureate Organization
IBDP	International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LP	Learner Profile
MMR	Mixed Methods Research
NPO	Non-Profit Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
RQ	Research Question
SD	Sustainable Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
ToK	Theory of Knowledge
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States (of America)

Chapter 1: Introduction

A. *Introduction*

The application of economics to education has been an interest pre-dating my entry into the profession. While taking a course in Public Choice Theory as part of an economics degree, I investigated key elements that would allow principals to be most effective. Some 20 years later and having become a principal, I am still wrestling with and intrigued by the challenges and opportunities of using my background in economics to help improve teaching and learning.

My interest in the application of an economic lens to education was piqued a few years ago after reading Stephen Gough's article "Philosophy of Education and Economics: A Case for Closer Engagement." Gough (2009) argued for the need to investigate the implications of applying a neoclassical economic paradigm to educational policy and practise. This fuelled my desire to formally investigate the *marketisation* of education as part of neoliberal policy implementation, which Gough (2009) claimed is based on a shaky and a *philosophically naïve* conceptual foundation (p. 269).

Gough (2009) drew upon the work of Le Grand (1991) who - in the earlier stages of the application of neoliberal economic theory to education - argued that there was a "striking imbalance between the ... sophistication of the economic analysis [applied to education policy creation] and the shallowness of its philosophical base" (Le Grand, 1991, p. 3). In formally considering the neoliberal *marketisation* of education many more questions emerged than answers:

- *What really is the philosophical base of neoliberalism?*
- *Is the base well defined?*
- *Was it purposefully applied to education, and what impact came from this application?*
- *To what degree is the application of an economic framework to education necessarily problematic?*
- *Have markets failed, per se, or have policy creators failed in their attempts of design and implementation?*
- *If markets are not the problem, where have we gone off course?*
- *If markets can produce a strong educational output, who determines exactly what that output looks like?*

While I have heard many malign the application of economics and markets to education (Ball, 2000; Connell, 2013), economics and markets may not be the issue. As a result of engaging with the article by Gough (2009), the impetus of better understanding the *marketisation* of education emerged. More specifically, a desire has emerged to better determine the degree to which we as practitioners and policy creators have adequately established a sufficient philosophical understanding of our educational aims and objectives. For if we haven't defined in specific and measurable terms what a *good education* is, how could we expect to realise it, via an economic market, or via another form of provision, such as a public good?

B. Background of the Issue

There has been a growing tendency for governments to introduce different forms of *privatisation* and market mechanisms into public education systems under neoliberal political reform (Catlaks & Dekoning, 2009; Ladd & Fiske, 2007; Catlaks & Dekoning, 2009; Waslander, Pater, & Van der Weide, 2010; Lake & Carter, 2011). The rise in the application of economics to education is a result of neoliberal policy reform and the vast majority of the research literature speaks to the negative impacts that have come as a result (Ball, Biesta, Carpenter, Weber, & Schugurensky, 2012; Connell, 2013). Within the research literature, the criticism of the neoliberal *marketisation* of education is typically grounded in how teaching and learning have come to be driven by the attainment of objectified, standardised learning outcomes as measured by high-stakes testing; as a result, the neoliberal *marketisation* of education has led to the loss of those broader educational goals that cannot be quantifiably measured – qualitative goals such as the fostering of human development as seen through intuitive knowledge, social and emotional knowledge, and developing creativity (Carpenter, Weber, & Schugurensky, 2012).

Over the past 20 years I have worked in several different international schools, each operating as an independent, privatised, market-based organization. Each school has offered the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) for students in Grades 11 and 12, and my experiences have indicated that students have had a high-quality education that has provided high levels of accountability, as well as allowing for the attainment of broader educational goals than attainment on standardised tests. That is, the schools I have worked in have been marketised and seemingly offered students a *good education*. My personal experiences in international schools offering the IBDP have been in direct contrast to the research literature, creating an apparent contradiction that is the motivation for this doctoral

thesis. Therefore, the goal of this thesis is to evaluate the degree to which the IBDP represents a *good education* as provided through a neoliberal, marketised system of delivery. To realise this goal, the thesis will investigate international schools offering the IBDP through the conceptual framework of a *good education* as provided by Gert Biesta.

C. Statement of the Issue

This doctoral thesis will investigate the degree to which a neoliberal market-based model can provide a *good education*. A conceptualization of a *good education* will be framed by the work of Gert Biesta through which market-based international schools offering the IB Diploma Programme will be analysed to determine the degree to which a *good education* can be realised while achieving key goals of neoliberal reform.

D. Purpose of the Study

The research literature suggests that the neoliberal *marketisation* of education has brought many negative implications to schools, but there has been a “disjuncture between the theory of neoliberalism, the practise of policy formation and the impacts of these policies on the actual lived realities in communities” (Carpenter, Weber, & Schugurensky, 2012, p. 146). The goals of neoliberal policy reform were grounded in “advancing the human condition through privatisation, entrepreneurialism, and competition,” but the research literature has been limited in investigating what this actually should look like as an end product; left to their own devices without a predetermined end product, markets have produced learning that has been fractured into a million testable objectives (De Lissovoy, 2015, p. 32). While it may be the case that the neoliberal *marketisation* of education has led to negative outcomes, we must take a step back and determine what we want as our educational output before determining whether markets are the cause of the problems. An underlying purpose of this thesis is to evaluate the degree to which international schools offering the IBDP to students in grades 11 and 12 (the final two years of high school) provide a quality education. If the analysis shows that markets can provide a *good education*, the findings of this study could provide a viable way forward for making positive change by building on neoliberalism without radically overhauling the entire system.

E. Key Terms

There are a number of related terms used in the research literature in regard to changes to the educational sector away from government provision. For example, policy reformers speak of

marketisation, privatisation, and commercialization. Regardless of the term, each falls under the umbrella of neoliberal market-based solutions. In terms of educational reform, this means moving education from being government-provided to being provided like (or more like) a private good.

Marketisation is “the intensified injection of market principles such as deregulation, competition, and stratification” into determining the provision of a good or service (Cucchiara, Gold, & Simon, 2011, p. 2464). *Marketisation* is “both a discursive and structural process that embraces choice, outsourcing, and standardization” (Cucchiara, Gold, & Simon, 2011, p. 2464). When looking specifically to the *marketisation* of education “standardised testing, ... an elevation of individual goals for education, and an increase in business involvement in schools” mark key reforms (Cucchiara, Gold, & Simon, 2011, p. 2464). *Marketisation* involves both the introduction of new policies to regulate the provision of a good or service, as well as “changes in the ways educational issues are discussed and understood” (Cucchiara, Gold, & Simon, 2011, p. 2464).

Privatisation refers more specifically to the goal of “bring[ing] the power of the private sector to bear upon the operations of public institutions, such as the management of public schools by private companies and the increase in school choice” (Cucchiara, Gold, & Simon, 2011, p. 2464). In contrast to *privatisation*, *marketisation* is meant to be a broader shift in which business-oriented principles are embraced in policy and “in the larger discourse around the operation of schools and the purpose of education” (Cucchiara, Gold, & Simon, 2011, p. 2464-2465). Some describe *privatisation* as “more than asset stripping the public sector” representing a strategy to “permanently restructuring the welfare state and public services in the interests of capital” (Whitfield, 2006).

Throughout most of the research literature *marketisation* and *privatisation* “are frequently used interchangeably to describe recent changes in welfare provision” (Whitty & Power, 2000, p. 93). Regardless of the exact term, “[n]eoliberalism seeks not to do away with the state but rather to reconstruct its internal rationality in terms of the market” with the broader goal of creating long-term favourable conditions for market activity to flourish within society (De Lissoy, 2015, p. 15).

Privatisation can practically occur in a variety of different ways. For example, ownership of assets (services, organisations, land, buildings, equipment, information and intellectual knowledge) can be sold or transferred directly to a private operator; governance and issues of accountability can be dissolved to new and private organizational structures, for example, a Board of Trustees. The ways in which the service is financed can change from the use of private capital to the introduction of user fees; core operating principles and values can be divested to reflect new interests and goals; certain elements of the provision of the good or service may be outsourced (Whitfield, 2006).

Marketisation involves “market forces [being] imposed in public services, which have traditionally been planned, delivered and financed by local and central government. This process involves five key elements:

- the commodification of services and infrastructure,
- the commodification of labour such as the reorganisation of work and jobs to maximise productivity and assist transfer to another employer;
- restructuring the state for competition and market mechanisms;
- restructuring democratic accountability and user involvement;
- embedding business interests and promoting liberalisation internationally (Whitfield, 2006, p. 4).

Marketisation can involve how certain goods or services are funded (Whitty & Power, 2000). More broadly there are also various ways in which the provision of a good or service can be funded. For example:

1. charging for public services previously paid for out of taxation,
2. letting the private sector run a service that continues to be paid for out of taxation,
3. selling public services and transferring their functions to the private sector,
4. deregulating the private sector or liberalizing arrangements that previously prevented the private sector from competing with state-provided services (Whitty & Power, 2000, p. 94).

Another way of framing *marketisation* is in regard to a decrease in government provision, a reduction of subsidies, a reduction of formal regulations, or “a straightforward transfer of services from public to private sectors” (Whitty & Power, 2000, p. 94).

If the criterion of funding is used, “it is difficult to argue that education has been privatised on any significant scale” (Whitty & Power, 2000, p. 94). Instead, based upon funding models, “*marketisation* might be a better metaphor for what has been happening,” and the creation of quasi-markets better reflects the changes in the provision of education in most national settings (Whitty & Power, 2000, p. 94). Quasi-markets typically involve the introduction of parental choice along with increased school autonomy, and often decreased government regulation (Whitty & Power, 2000). While there may often be decreased governmental regulations on day-to-day operations of a school in regard to finances, a quasi-market “usually remains highly regulated, with the government controlling such matters as entry by new providers, investment, the quality of service, and price, which is usually zero to the user (Whitty & Power, 2000, p. 95). One typical feature is the “lack of a conventional cash nexus” along with a still strongly felt government presence “distinguish quasi-markets from the idealised view of a *free* market” (Whitty & Power, 2000, p. 95).

F. Significance of the Study

Educational reform on a global scale has been driven by neoliberal ideology designed to improve economic output (Connell, 2013; Grek, 2009). This can be seen through the stratifying effects of performance evaluation and standardised testing through the use of global indices such as the PISA (Grek, 2009). The OECD, the UN, and the World Bank actively promote and financially support certain policy reform with a “taken-for-grantedness about education indicators” such that many national systems adopt derivative educational policies without any contextual explanation nor full understanding of the implications (Grek, 2009, p. 25).

In spite of the prevalence of neoliberal ideology within educational systems many educators are not highly aware of its impact on what they teach, how they teach, and ultimately what their students learn, and end up not learning (Connell, 2013). Goals of human development and the attainment of well-being are being marginalised as realised ends of the educational process (Lubienski, 2016). The significance of this doctoral thesis is that it will help bring to light the need of defining a *good education* before we can determine how best to provide it. Teachers, administrators, policy makers, students, and parents must be informed of the qualities of a *good education* before schools embark upon the provision thereof. Leaders

involved in the production and consumption of an education need to question, debate, and be able to justify the ends they are serving, attaining and achieving.

The investigation of international schools offering the IBDP in a marketised setting provides further significance in regard to extrapolating the findings to other educational settings. If found to offer a *good education* according to the criteria of Biesta, the findings of this research can be useful to determine the degree to which international schools offering the IBDP could be a replicable model to help other educational systems improve. If the findings suggest that the IBDP offered within a market-based setting does not provide a *good education*, more investigation could nevertheless move the debate of the *marketisation* of education forward, perhaps pushing back to governmental provision.

There is also broader significance to the findings of this thesis based upon the rapid increase in the *privatisation* of education in many national systems, since privatised schooling has become big business on a global scale (Catlaks & Dekoning, 2009). The provision of public services via neoliberal *privatisation* is “increasingly a focus for private investment and profit, particularly on a trans-national level (Ibid, p. 154). This is seen, for example, through the UK-based educational services company Nord-Anglia, which runs schools globally, with campuses located in Moscow, Pundong (South Korea), Warsaw, Shanghai, Bratislava, and Berlin (Ibid, 2009). The provision of educational services has become an emerging market for foreign direct investment (FDI) and has grown dramatically, now forming a “significant portion of the portfolio investment of commercial, financial and private equity companies” (Ibid, p. 154). Further, finding ways for emerging countries to “secure inward private investment in education is a key target identified for the developing world by the United Nations and the African Union” (Ibid, p. 154). Even at national levels, privatised schooling is growing, as shown in the case of Sweden, where more than 40% of the upper secondary schools in Sweden are independent, representing “more than a fifth of all students and as many as half of students in wealthier, urban municipalities” (Arreman & Holm, 2011, p. 235). Of the independent schools operating within Sweden - across the spectrum of pre-school through upper-secondary - 79% were operated by independent, commercially driven companies, and of these there was “a dominance by 10 specific providers” (Ibid, p. 230). Given the prominent growth of market-based schools, findings of this thesis will help in understanding and moving the debate forward.

Finally, significance for this doctoral thesis is grounded in its attempt to bridge current theory with practise. A goal is to provide a foundation for improving and expanding the application of theory rather than simply throwing it out. The goal is not to revert to the *good old days* when governments provided education without the accountability desired by neoliberal reform, as “it is all too easy to slip from careful re-assessment and analysis into nostalgia and *golden ageism*” (Ball, 2012, p. 17). Instead, significance in this study will come from determining what needs to be preserved from neoliberal reform and finding ways to implement new directions rather than starting anew.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

A. *Introduction*

This two-part literature review draws upon research literature to delineate how the field of economics initially found its way into education, and also outlines how neoliberal economic reform made its way into educational policy while examining its impact. An analysis of the research literature related to the impact of neoliberal educational reform follows. A consideration of the application of economics to educational settings is considered as a potential, but not inevitable, cause of the adverse effects of neoliberal educational policy reform. The literature review moves past the debate about whether education is a private good or public good and looks at the underlying question of what a *good education* should be. The second part of the literature review draws upon research investigating what constitutes a *good education*. The framing goal of the thesis tests whether a *good education* can be provided in a market-based structure, using the IBDP, as offered in an international school setting, to investigate and analyse the premise of the thesis.

B. *Review of Research*

1. **How Economics Found Its Way into Education**

Neoclassical economics is billed as “the most influential social scientific discipline in policy terms” (Gough, 2009, p. 274) with its framework considered to be “the predominant paradigm of thought” over the 20th century (Bogenhold, 2010, p. 1569). Unsurprisingly, the use of economics as a lens to shape and evaluate educational policy has fundamentally reshaped the landscape, largely because “financial support for K–12 education is one of a nation’s major objects of public expenditure,” with the amount spent on education as a percentage of GDP continually increasing over the past 50 years (Ladd & Fiske, 2007, p. 4).

Increased government spending in education stemmed from the growing use of scientific industrial methods in industry beginning in the late 1800s (Ladd & Fiske, 2007). As a result, in the early 1900s, governments began to “appropriate money in a manner that forcefully influenced education policy” to better ensure the quality of education in preparing a more qualified workforce to meet the new demands on labour (Ibid, p. 7). Over time, increased spending came to be seen as a signal of the sector’s inefficiency, which led to the call for policy reform. This call for reform to increase efficiency of output at lower cost has brought education under ever-increasing economic investigation. As a result of the magnitude of public spending

and the demand for accountability, educational discourse has been increasingly influenced by economic concepts, ways of thinking, and ends (Gilead, 2012).

Under neoliberal policy reform, economics has been applied to education in order to help improve economic growth and development within a country (Gilead, 2012). The OECD and the World Bank are explicit in encouraging and supporting the development of effective educational policy as “education is primarily a tool for improving economic performance” (Ibid, p. 113). The OECD, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) have each “played an increasingly instrumental role in advancing free market ideas as the basis for development” (Robertson, et al., 2012, p. 24). The idea of promoting economic growth is grounded in the neoliberal thought and political movement and “[t]he economic growth paradigm equates development and growth (McClure, 2014, p. 474).

The entry of neoliberal economics into education took a quantum leap forward following the 1983 US publication of *A Nation at Risk* – a report “highlighting the deficiencies of the U.S. education system” with US policy reform effectively being exported globally (Ladd & Fiske, 2007 p. 23-24). The premise of the report was that a better-educated labour force, as a result of improving the quality of schools, would increase the competitiveness of the U.S. economy. Policy reformers at all levels across national systems, realising they had to improve the level and quality of education, turned to economic-based incentives to improve public schools.

The impact of neoliberal reform on teaching and learning, from policy and practise, to pupils and politicians, has been significant, as education has been “one of the most important sectors in which neoliberal austerity measures have recently been implemented” (De Lissovoy, 2015, p. 13). In Canada, for example, along with the significant decreases in federal and provincial funding that forced provinces to significantly cut costs, there were also “increases in standardisation of testing and curriculum” in order to increase public accountability (Carpenter, Weber, & Schugurensky, 2012, p. 147). More broadly, “[p]olicy models have followed OECD (2003) recommendations and focused on creating incentive-based markets for individual participation, public-private partnerships for service delivery, and extensive decreases in public funding” (Carpenter, Weber, & Schugurensky, 2012, p. 148).

Neoliberal economic policy first gained international traction in Chile under Pinochet's right-wing dictatorship in 1973 as it was held to extreme austerity measures by the IMF (Connell, 2013). The late 1970s saw the emergence of a world recession that made it particularly difficult for US corporations to maintain profits due to rapidly increasing wages spurred on by high levels of inflation and newly developing international competition (Baltodano, 2012). The slowing of the global economy in the late 1970s and early 1980s put pressure on governments to meet their spending requirements, which translated into pressure to increase taxes. In a direct response, the U.S. government implemented neoliberal economic policies (known as "Reaganomics") in an attempt to avoid increasing taxes (Baltodano, 2012). Similar neoliberal economic policies came into effect in the UK under Margaret Thatcher, enabling "a neoliberal takeover of the IMF and the World Bank in the 1980s, and the creation of Structural Adjustment Programmes" (Connell, 2013, p. 100). These neoliberal austerity programmes were imposed by the IMF and the World Bank in the 1980s and 1990s across global markets (De Lissovoy, 2015; Connell, 2013). Over a twenty-year period, the proliferation of neoliberal economic reform led to "a dramatic collapse of economic security and public services," with education being one of the public services most greatly affected (Connell, 2013, p. 101).

Neoliberal market-based economic policy assumes that the private sector is more efficient than the public sector in managing systems operations; neoliberal policy reform pushed for decreased government provision of goods and services in order to lower taxes by minimizing public funding (Klein & Shimoni-Hershkoviz, 2016; Carpenter, Weber, & Schugurensky, 2012; Connell, 2013). In the longer term, the reform justifies itself because "excessive government debt poses a threat to future generations and undermines business and consumer confidence in the economy" (De Lissovoy, 2015, p. 10). In the shorter term, neoliberal policy reform justifies itself because government spending crowds out private investment in the economy, typically leading to inflation (De Lissovoy, 2015).

Neoliberalism gained prominence as it would "restore confidence ... by creating the anticipation of lowered tax burdens and increased opportunities for private investment" (De Lissovoy, 2015, p. 10). Neoliberalism advocated that market rules and principles needed to be used to restructure public sector organizations in order to create "public services motivated by self-interest rather than genuine commitment to serve public need" (O'Neill, 2011, p. 21). The neoliberal reform of public services like education would address government failures through "the introduction of accountability and monitoring mechanisms in order to prevent corruption

and bias ... by achieving specified outcomes into a matter of contract, not trust” (O’Neill, 2011, p. 26).

Neoliberal educational reform argued that the production of education had no “disciplinary control of market forces” because:

teaching is a labour process without an object. At best it has an object so intangible – the minds of kids, of their capacity to learn – that it cannot be specified in any but vague and metaphorical ways. A great deal of work is done in schools, day in and day out, but this work does not produce any things. Nor does it, like other white-collar work, produce visible and quantifiable effects ... The *outcomes of teaching*, to use the jargon of educational research, are notoriously difficult to measure (Stevenson & Wood, 2013, p. 70).

In order for there to be accountability in teaching and learning, neoliberal reform aimed to eliminate professionals serving their own interests by putting control in the hands of consumers through the quantification of educational output. This concept of shifting control of accountability from producer to consumer is known as producer capture (Stevenson & Wood, 2013).

The neoliberal economic solution to achieve *producer capture* was grounded in scientific management techniques; the premise of such techniques is that managers need to be able to control the means of production. In the case of education, this had historically been problematic as there was no tangible output to control. Before neoliberal reform, attempts to control education and establish a measure of accountability was imposed through the inputs – teachers. However, there is an inherent challenge in controlling teachers as workers, as such professionals fundamentally control their own labour processes through their expertise, knowledge and skills relevant to their jobs. Managers can only control such labour if the expertise, knowledge and skills can be “deconstructed ... into a number of discrete elements, transforming each one into a measurable and quantifiable process” (Stevenson & Wood, 2013, p. 47). This theory of management, known as “Taylorism,” as drawn from studying factory work in the early 1900s, necessitated the quantification of educational output so that an input-output relationship could be leveraged for purposes of managerial control (Stevenson & Wood, 2013).

Looking back to the history of accountability in education, there have been several “significant improvements in education statistics [but] ... there were still no meaningful indicators of education achievement or outcomes” from the early 1900s through the 1960s (Ladd & Fiske, 2007, p. 106). The use of high-stakes testing has become “pivotal to securing the neo-liberal restructuring of schools” and the goal of ensuring accountability is being used to “assert increased control over teachers’ work” (Stevenson & Wood, 2013, p. 42). Ensuring accountability requires that “the value of individual teacher’s work be measured and quantified and ... high-stakes testing underpins these processes” (Stevenson & Wood, 2013, p. 42).

The neoliberal *marketisation* of education was meant to enable citizens to make better-informed decisions about schooling through the transparency that came from the publishing of standardised test results; parents could directly see the overall quality of the product they were purchasing and “hold organizations and officials accountable” (Cucchiara, Gold, & Simon, 2011, p. 2466). The provision of education through neoliberal market reform was intended to transform schools into private sector businesses to best achieve the goals of increased speed of production, efficiency, and individualization promoted by the market itself (Abowitz, 2008). However, the question of what makes a quality product was never explored, even though a concurrent assumption in higher efficiency as an outcome of the reform itself remained.

Neoliberal policies became popular as they forged a theoretical objective link between inputs and outputs (Campbell, Campbell, & Chia, 1998). By quantifying educational output, neoliberal systems of accountability could mirror those in the private sector for the betterment of all concerned (Hills, Scott, Markham, & Vest, 1987). The broad assumption was that parents would use “market information in order to make rational choices” (Stevenson & Wood, 2013, p. 49). The provision of “published test results, ranked in league tables” allows for parents as consumers to make like-for-like comparisons of options and ... open enrolment means that parents can ultimately hold lower performing schools accountable by opting for other providers (Stevenson & Wood, 2013, p. 49).

The conceptualization of parental choice in neoliberal educational policy research is based on the assumption that parents will select schools based upon their academic performance, as evidenced by results on standardised testing (Waslander, Pater, & Van der Weide, 2010). If this premise is to hold, a necessary condition is that parents are aware of these policies and

they are incentivised by them in choosing the schools for their children (Waslander, Pater, & Van der Weide, 2010, p. 29). However, research literature suggests that “parents have unequal knowledge about details of choice programmes” (Waslander, Pater, & Van der Weide, 2010, p. 29). Further, the research behind the policies bringing in choice programmes suggests that parents do not act in a rational manner consistent with assumptions of the economic modelling when they are choosing schools for their children (Waslander, Pater, & Van der Weide, 2010, p. 30).

Compounding the conceptualization of parental choice in the research on the efficacy of neoliberal educational reform is that results from nonpartisan research on parental choice reveals that parents make decisions about schools based on socio-geographic factors (things such as travel feasibility, family logistics, the number of parents, their working locations, their working hours, access to child care, and public transportation) instead of published records of academic achievement (Waslander, Pater, & Van der Weide, 2010, p. 25). This calls into question how effective league tables really are in allowing for a highly rational process of accountability.

In summary, while economics crept into education over many decades, neoliberal policy reform quickly gained acceptance in the 1970s as a result of global economic reform that explicitly pointed out the lack of accountability for the significant financial resources governments were investing in education. The application of economics through neoliberal reform was intended to help ensure accountability for governmental funds. The rationale of nations’ needing to ensure global economic efficiency and competitiveness was at the same time the rationale for the reform and, surprisingly, the mechanism to achieve that end. A review of the elements that led to neoliberal policy reform, this thesis looks next at the impacts that resulted.

2. The Impact of the Application of Economics on Education

a. An Emphasis on the Quantification of Education

The application of neoliberal economics to education has led to several significant outcomes, the first is an emphasis on the quantification of learning. During the past 20 years, there has been a “remarkable rise in interest in the measurement of education,” and this is seen through initiatives such as Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), and OECD’s Programme for

International Student Assessment (PISA), with billions of dollars invested and countless hours of research, policy creation, and ultimately implementation (Biesta, 2016, p. 10). Such studies and measures of academic success are competitive in nature and their results are used by governments to “inform educational policy ... under the banner of *raising standards*” (Biesta, 2016, p. 10). Such a significant shift in focus begs the question, how did this come about?

Neoclassical economics functions via mathematical modelling “seeking to analyse phenomena by breaking them down into the smallest units of investigation from which they emerge” (Gilead, 2012, p. 114-115). In the extreme, neoclassical economic thought is so “devoid of human context it portrays humans as mathematical functions rather than living bodies (Bogenhold, 2010, p. 1569). While not an explicit goal, “the mechanics of schooling begin running their own accord,” and quantifiable grades as the measure of learning became both means and ends of public schooling (Tocci, 2010, p. 762). The motivation for the application of economic modelling made sense as it allows for sophisticated analysis; however, while there are benefits, they “come at the price of disregarding the wider social context” of education (Gilead, 2012, p. 114-115). The narrowing of the educational product to measurable outputs inspired this thesis to investigate if the wider social contexts must inevitably be disregarded. The critics of neoliberal reform in education are vocal but have not investigated the IBDP methodically.

The quantification of learning emerged in neoliberal reform in an analogous way to the relationship of prices in markets. For markets to work effectively, there must be “a communicative signal between producers and consumers” (Stevenson & Wood, 2013, p. 49). When looking at the application of neoliberal *marketisation* to education, “published test scores perform the function of price in the market for school education” (Stevenson & Wood, 2013, p. 49). Grades and standardised test scores began to represent valorisation in the school system and now provide “a quantifiable expression of a school’s output,” serving as a signal to consumers that allows them to express their consumer preferences through the market (Stevenson & Wood, 2013, p. 49). In the absence of any other formal signal, test scores have come to drive education the same way price drives markets. Governments and educational policy makers are increasingly focused on research, policies, and/or programmes that indicated improved learning as measured by standardised test results. The “increasing emphasis on scientific research in education,” such as the US Department of Education allocates federal research grants only for the development and use of reading programmes if they have shown

student improvement through scientific, quantifiable research means (Ladd & Fiske, 2007 p. 88). The emphasis on scientific research in education, as a result of neoliberal educational reform, further elevates grades, as established through standardised testing, as the signal of success and learning in schools.

The defining and measuring of learning through quantifiable test results acts as a powerful signal to teachers in terms of where and how they focus their limited time and energy in class. While there are benefits to the sharpened focus this creates, “firms do not get what they do not measure” (Campbell, Campbell, & Chia, 1998, p. 135). With the demands of market-based incentives being so dominant, the immeasurable elements of education, such as the acquisition of dispositions or the fostering of individuality and creativity, tend to be marginalised or simply dropped (Ramirez, 2010). Even if teachers have the best of intentions to meet broader aims beyond test results, the “pressures they feel to perform well on these scores” mean that they focus on the most immediate priority at the expense of other, non-measured goals (Carpenter, Weber, & Schugurensky, 2012, p. 149). Within the IBDP, a key required element of learning is the acquisition of the Learner Profile attributes. These are dispositional habits that students are expected to acquire to shape them holistically as learners. Once again, while the research literature is clear on national systems marginalizing or completely dropping such learning objectives, the IBDP at least expects these in policy, which supports this thesis examining the degree to which these dispositional habits are developed in the classroom.

The neoliberal process of accountability continues to become increasingly myopic as “the higher the stakes, the more relentless the focus on the target;” further testing leads to increased honing and “testing in turn assumes a simpler form and the curriculum necessarily narrows” (Stevenson & Wood, 2013, p. 55). The impact has been so great that there has been a “noted shift away from the notion that the purpose of evaluation and assessment is to promote growth” and has instead simply become the end unto itself (Carpenter, Weber, & Schugurensky, 2012, p. 145).

The technologies employed to improve test results have negatively impacted overall classroom quality (Plank, 2013). The change in focus “from school inputs to student outcomes” came about with little research and guidance in terms of how schools should realise improvements in student outcomes (Plank, 2013, p. 1152). The lack of guidance meant that teachers came under even greater pressure to increase test results, and this compounded the issue as

“classroom quality is lower when classrooms are under pressure to increase test performance” (Plank, 2013, p. 1152).

A meta-analysis of 49 qualitative studies, investigating how high-stakes testing affected pedagogical practise and curriculum, revealed the introduction of high-stakes accountability testing had “the predominant effect of narrowing curricular content to those subjects included in the tests (Au, 2007, p. 264). Teachers became ever more focused on short-term gains in order to improve test results at the exclusion of other learning (Stevenson & Wood, 2013; Carpenter, Weber, & Schugurensky, 2012). Those subjects assessed - particularly math, science, and language arts - are prioritised by the microscope of accountability (Diamond & Spillane, 2004). The pressures of accountability are clear through the research, and it may be more evident in international schools, as a school’s continued operation depends solely on tuition. Lower grades and test scores lead to fewer customers. In the case of international schools offering the IBDP, a key factor in the exploration of this thesis is focused on determining the degree to which the pressures of achieving test results impact teachers’ day-to-day interactions with students in class. Previous research does not explore whether administrative accountability using broader measures of teachers’ success is a replicable feature of the IBDP schools.

The introduction of neoliberal reform not only narrowed the curricular focus, but also led to learning becoming much more passive, as students are not challenged and engaged in learning that demands more than factual and reproducible knowledge (Hamre & Pianta, 2005). This passive learning environment created is typically a result of teachers deferring to “more lecture-based, teacher-centred pedagogies” in order to more efficiently deliver increasingly fragmented bits and pieces of knowledge in order to prepare for the tests (Au, 2007, p. 264). The overemphasis on standardised test results has pressured teachers to move away from best practise, such as creating and delivering lessons grounded in inquiry, and instead has them relying on methods they refer to as “drive-by teaching” (Valli & Buese, 2007, p. 545). In contrast, the IBDP promotes and expects teaching and learning to be grounded in constructivist-based pedagogy. This paradigm of teaching and learning is grounded in:

the belief that teaching should facilitate the development of new learning, knowledge, and identity in students through the fostering of creative and collaborative relationships

and on the basis of respect for individuals and the understanding they bring with them to the classroom” (De Lissovoy, 2015, p. 150).

This constructivist paradigm of best practise directly opposes the traditional view of teacher-directed pedagogy where an authority provides what needs to be learned, typically passively, by students in a manner “in which knowledge is acquired rather than produced” (De Lissovoy, 2015, p. 150). Under neo-liberal reform, teachers are actually expected to engage in constructivist-based units, but because of the pressures of accountability, they are “thrown back on their heels as the constraints of the overwhelming drive to climb in accountability rankings” force them to teach to the test (De Lissovoy, 2015, p. 45), abandoning the very approach that traditionalists and neoliberals alike praise. This gives rise to another area of investigation for this thesis – the degree to which best pedagogical practise is allowed within the IBDP classroom, as the research notes inconsistencies in practise.

Changes in educational policy as a result of neoliberal economic reform were intended to improve learning as measured through standardised test scores. Setting aside questions about if improved standardised test scores are desirable and whether they best represent learning, research about whether the policies actually improve this type of learning is inconclusive. (Waslander, Pater, & Van der Weide, 2010, p. 1; Cucchiara, Gold, & Simon, 2011; Plank, 2013; Ladd & Fiske, 2007; Trujillo, 2012).

b. A Resocialization of Education

The application of neoliberal market-based economics to education has led to an overemphasis on the quantification of learning in its educational output. Not only has the nature of the end product been (re)defined through neoliberal reform, but there has also been a change to the nature of *socialization* achieved through the educational process. Education not only equips students with key skills and knowledge but is also fundamentally a “transformational process that brings into play a new set of values and a new moral environment” (Gewirtz, 2002, p. 47). Neoliberal educational policy has not only affected explicit technologies like high-stakes accountability but has also affected “the fundamental social ... purposes of education” (Carpenter, Weber, & Schugurensky, 2012, p. 145).

Neoliberal educational reform has been a midwife for economic competitiveness and has led to an “overriding emphasis on ... economic competitiveness and an increasing neglect or side-

lining of the social purposes of education” (Ball, 2013, p. 14). This reculturing has come to “transform the notion of citizenship and [has] produced new subjectivities, moralities and behaviours and desires” (Baltodano, 2012, p. 492). The neoliberal paradigm of education promotes economic values, including efficiency and choice, at the expense of other values, such as educating future citizens, promoting social justice, or developing individual interests and talents, so they are viewed as “obvious (and unquestioned) goods” (Cucchiara, Gold, & Simon, 2011, p. 2464).

Ball (2000) speaks of a new master narrative that has come to “define and constrain the whole variety of relationships within and between the state, civil society and the economy” as determined by neoliberal reform (p. 17). The process of education is one in which those being educated “appropriate the purpose which actuates it, become familiar with its methods and subject matters ... becoming saturated with its emotional spirit” (Dewey, 1916, p. 16). Students typically internalise prevailing social values and norms in school by way of collateral learning; this informal curriculum is not overtly taught and “is often much more important than the spelling lesson or lesson in geography or history that is learned” (Dewey, 1916, p. 48). Through students’ interpersonal experiences in school, these new members of society come to internalise societal ideals, hopes, expectations, standards and opinions “through a process of transmission ... of habits of doing, thinking, and feeling” from the older to the younger (Dewey, 1916, p. 6). There are social controls operating implicitly within schools, in the same way rules of particular games operate as controlling features of human interaction engaged in those games (Dewey, 1938). The rules of any game are not merely part of the game, but essentially are the game, in that “if there are no rules, then no game; different rules, then a different game” (Dewey, 1938, p. 52). The imposition of neoliberal policy techniques within education “is not value neutral but is imbued with the values embedded within the wider system” (Stevenson & Wood, 2013, p. 50).

Neoliberal educational reform may have fallen prey to “perhaps the greatest of all pedagogical fallacies” by grounding itself in “the notion that a person learns only the particular thing he is studying at the time” (Dewey, 1916, p. 48). With the impacts of neoliberal collateral learning unplanned for and left unchecked, “a regime of neo-liberal corporate accountability has dominated education” (Ranson, 2003, p. 464), leaving the market to be its own teacher through a constant reweaving of the social fabric (Dewey, 1916, p. 6). As a result of being part of such a system that values test results, “[s]tudents are made aware of the importance of such tests,

and become focused on performing when required” (Stevenson & Wood, 2013, pp. 51-52). In order to become used to such an environment, students are trained within the culture of assessment in order to prepare them for the testing regime they will need to navigate (Stevenson & Wood, 2013, pp. 51-52). In the end, “with markets all around, what else are people likely to learn?” (Connell, 2013, p. 110).

It is necessary to note that most research is highly critical of neoliberal reform, and its impact on the *socialization* of students through the learning process is limited, with essentially all of it focused on US and UK national systems. Ball (2000) speaks of neoliberal reform creating a new master narrative, almost pre-concluding that education in a market-based paradigm is necessarily negative. This thesis intends to open discussion about whether market-based solutions necessarily lead to negative implications as a result of this iteration of neoliberal reform. A master-narrative is present, as Ball notes; however, if those in charge of neoliberal reform had philosophically framed the qualities of a *good education* ahead of letting markets run loose, would the end results have been different? The IBDP has framed a vision of quality, and market-based international schools are bringing the vision to life. Assuming they are doing this well and providing a *good education*, perhaps national systems like the US and UK could also have realised better ends even with the application of market-based strategies of implementation.

A further criticism of neoliberal reform on the *socialization* of students notes that the focus of education has been shifted from serving the public to a focus of education serving the individual (Cucchiara, Gold, & Simon, 2011, p. 2466). The “obsessive focus” to maximise the educational output of the individual, while designed to ensure accountability to improve quality, is viewed negatively because it is seen to be grounded in the premise that “standardised test coheres ideologically with a *businessification* of education” (De Lissovoy, 2015, p. 19). As a result of this, neoliberal educational reform serves “to reconstruct the meaning of education that lives within public schools in terms of a private entrepreneurialism” (De Lissovoy, 2015, p. 15). This reconstruction happens within a philosophical framework that promotes a narrow cognition, grounded in competition and compliance and does not allow for the realisation of a critical, constructivist educational experience intended to generate “an empowered subjectivity where individuals learn to critically read the social world” (De Lissovoy, 2015, p. 40). In a neoliberal educational framework, students are therefore socialised into the private world of business in which “complex social processes and events fit into simple

figures or categories of judgements [through] ... the establishment of a new form of control” (Ball, 2003, p. 217). While this may be the case in the educational settings used within the research literature here, the question arises: Is this a necessary result of education provided through neoliberal market-based mechanisms? The IBDP expects student agency, as seen through their critical engagement in open-ended learning, providing an important element tested by this thesis.

Change made to the language of education is one way in which neoliberal policy reform affects the process of socialization in schools (Connell, 2013). During the past 20 years, there has been a “gradual absorption of business language (such as ‘best practise’) into education” as the discourse of policy reform filtered down into the language used to hold students accountable for their academic achievement (such as “learning targets” and “performance indicators”) (Connell, 2013, p. 109). As a result of this change in discourse, neoliberal policy established a new knowledge base in schools framed in a new vocabulary that influenced the instructional setting, doing so in a “closed loop that does not allow other kinds of knowledge to enter policy debate” (Connell, 2013, p. 109). Accountability, quantifiability, and competition became “the *lingua franca* of this new discourse of power” as seen in neoliberalism’s encroachment into education; these changes in language solidified changes in who students were becoming (Ball, 2000, p. 1). Again, while the impact language has on culture is significant, changes in language do not necessarily mean that the resultant changes in culture are negative merely because the language is “business-centric.” What we call the end result of learning is not necessarily the issue, whether it is a target, objective, desired outcome, or the thing we want students to learn. Illustrating the necessity of focusing on the substance of the target is another purpose of this study. This means, teaching to a test is never a problem, as long as the test is good.

Neoliberal educational reform has also impacted the process of socialization in classrooms as a result of effectively making the basis of the relationship between student and teacher transactional (Ball, 2000; Valli & Buese, 2007). Teachers have needed to relate to their students differently because of the pressures of being evaluated against standardised test results. The research notes that in order to cover content in preparation for the tests, teachers have come to relate to students more generically in order to “enact pedagogies that are at odds with their vision of best practise” (Valli & Buese, 2007, p. 520).

The unintended result of neoliberal reform is that students and teachers report that relationships feel depersonalised, and that there is a high degree of stress placed on the relationship because of the focus on productivity over relationships, when relationships are often at the heart of learning (Valli & Buese, 2007). The result of focusing a school system on the individual goals of a neoliberal education crowds out the attainment of broader educational goals such as “preparing citizens to participate in and improve one’s community” (Trujillo, 2012, p. 340).

Under a regime of high-stakes testing and competition-driven accountability, aims focused on the improvement of the individual are “amplified ... to the detriment of public ones” (Trujillo, 2012, p. 340). Again, while the research literature is clear in this sentiment in regard to public schools in the US and the UK, is this a necessary outcome? Do teachers necessarily have to depersonalise their students due to low exam grades? Typically, international schools offering the IBDP have remarkably positive, strong communities, with the teacher-student relationship a central factor.

Research literature on neoliberal reform generally concludes that the revolution of accountability that sprang forth from neoliberal policy reform “generated perverse unintended consequences” and there was, in fact, a displacement of the internal goods of excellence (Ranson, 2003, p. 460). While the demise of certain normative ends has resulted from neoliberal reform, the question remains: Must there be a trade-off? Trujillo’s (2012) analogy of crowding out is drawn from economics, where government investment crowds out private investment, as there is a maximum net level of investment an economy can bear before severe inflationary pressures emerge due to the oversupply of investment capital. In this purely economic setting, there is a limit to how much investment the overall market can absorb; however, it is likely a false analogy that one’s learning is similarly capped. That is, it is possible that the learning of individual skills does not limit the ability for students to also learn broader dispositions and concepts. Instead, learning more holistically may amplify the return on quantifiable results. Other questions to explore include whether markets and the *marketisation* of education is the root cause. To what degree were markets set up to succeed? Further, would government provision have done any better?

C. Is the Application of Economics the Issue?

Post-World War II educational systems were grounded in Keynesian political and philosophical rhetoric with little regard to evidence (Ladd & Fiske, 2007, p. 15). Beginning in the 1970s, the political and social transformation that came “under the sign of the free market” (Connell, 2013, p. 101) meant there was “a shift in educational debate as to what counted as evidence of an effective education” (Ibid, p.101) so governments, at all levels, became “much more interested in the collection of data on outcomes, and making them available in a way that permits their use in decision making” (Ladd & Fiske, 2007, p. 15). This gave rise to the “prominence of economics in education research focused on standards- and outcomes-based accountability” (Ladd & Fiske, 2007, pg. 15). In the paradigm shift, however, educational policy makers did not stop to consider whether the expectations they were asking from markets were sound, nor did they stop to consider the implications (Connell, 2013).

In turning to economic markets for neoliberal educational reform, there was a strong appeal to the sophistication of analysis that economic modelling allowed in its application to educational policy creation and evaluation (Le Grand, 1991). However, there was also a shallowness of its philosophical base that policy creators did not address, that resulted in educational policy grounded in neoliberal economics which was philosophically empty. Le Grand’s (1991) commentary implied a criticism of markets as being philosophically shallow, and Gough’s (2009) commentary asked educational policy creators to consider the philosophical underpinnings of economically market-driven educational policy. This thesis questions, however, the value of examining the philosophical underpinnings of the market, and instead posits that economics and markets are not the issue; rather, that there has instead been a misunderstanding of what economics and markets can be expected to do for education.

Economic modelling has come to be the dominant conceptual framework to understand and recommend how to systematically allocate scarce resources to meet and maximise the efficiency of production needs of a predetermined good or service (Gilead, 2009; Vandenberghe, 1999). Economists create simplified models and theories of societal interactions in order to understand and make recommendations for improvement. The models establish basic assumptions, based on limited variables, and require analysing and understanding an issue through quantifiable data that can be empirically tested. Economics, therefore, deals with positive matters of investigation, “attempting to discern whether predictions of cause and effect are true, and whether they are generalizable” (Ladd & Fiske,

2007 p. 25). The appeal of discerning generalizable predictions of cause and effect within an educational setting is understandable, but is it appropriate? Neoliberal educational reform attempted to mechanise teaching and learning, with the goal of building the perfect assembly line, based upon mathematical modelling. However, the desire to extrapolate data to predict an outcome presumes that such a predictable outcome represents a *good education*. What if it were the case that a *good education* had students create the new and the novel? In such a paradigm, an assembly line would not be desired, but this does not mean that markets could not still work.

1. Is Education Expecting What It Should from Economics?

A market allows the pursuit of individual goals and self-interest by bringing consumers and producers together in a system of social interdependence mediated through prices (Gilead, 2009). Markets are not meant to define what is to be produced or consumed; instead, markets are meant only to facilitate the exchange of goods and services, maximizing the efficiency of the creation and exchange of goods and services, through price. What is produced or consumed is a normative issue – an “ought” – and is meant to be assigned to the market via the consumer, the producer, or a third party. This thesis focuses on what a quality education should be, and defining clear guidelines for it to consumers, producers, or an external source, like the government, before asking a market to provide it.

As neoliberal economic reform swept economies forward through price-driven *marketisation*, educational reform got caught up along the way. However, the nature of education provided no price mechanism to drive the market. In a regular market setting, price dictates how much is produced and how much is consumed. If the price is too high, consumers will not demand the product. If the price is too low, producers will not provide the service. Markets work and goods and services are produced and consumed when there is an equilibrium between consumers and producers, as determined by price. In the case of education, however, education isn't purchased like a bicycle is in a store. As a result, neoliberal educational reform needed some type of objective, quantifiable signal to drive the market for education; in the absence of anything else, the result was the passive adoption of standardised test results as the measure to determine market success.

The adoption of standardised test results as a marker of neoliberal educational success came about as economists applied a production function – an input-output framework – to learning.

The goal was to determine a causal, mathematical function between the various inputs of learning - family background, individual student characteristics, school resources, teacher quality, pedagogical strategies, peer characteristics, and other external factors - and the educational output that resulted (Ladd & Fiske, 2007). All factors (input and output) had to be quantified, and this meant that student output – learning – had to also be objectively quantified in order to determine the mathematical function for producing learning. By requiring quantifiable outputs, and myopically focusing on the aforementioned questions, neoliberal educational reform crowded out the need for pursuing any other measurable ends for education (Biesta, 2016; Campbell, Campbell, & Chia, 1998).

The use of a production function in modelling the process of education is problematic due to the inherent time lag between inputs and key educational outputs. Educational goals such as instilling and developing social values, aspirations, and well-being require a long-term time frame (Gough, 2009). With the application of economic modelling to educational policy, decisions of cost and benefit tend to be judged against what can be achieved, seen, valued, or lost in the immediate short term (Gough, 2009). It is appealing to use a neo-classical economic framework grounded in the short term for educational analysis because it provides “a sophisticated set of tools to make rigorous decisions” (Gough, 2009, p. 275). However, the use of such tools leads to market failure as it undervalues, and therefore underproduces, such goals that are not realised in the short term (Gough, 2009).

This means neoliberal accountability systems, as they have emerged, bereft of a grounding in purposeful educational philosophy, have fatal flaws in their technical validity (the degree to which standardised tests accurately measure learning) and issues of normative validity (the degree to which we measure what we actually want to) We are not measuring what we value, but instead are simply “valuing what we can measure” (Biesta, 2016, p. 13). The resultant neoliberal policy and practises that came to life “manifest in the rhetoric of improvement and raising standards,” but in reality “focus on performance indicators chosen for ease of measurement and control rather than because they measure accurately what the quality of performance is” (O’Neill, 2002).

Neoliberal policy and practical reform brought to life a *marketisation* of education that did first address the underlying normative issues – the “*shoulds*” of education. Instead of first addressing what the end product of a *good education* should look like, neoliberal policy reform

settled into the lowest common denominator measuring output and success, resulting in the quantification of learning through standardised testing, which led to a resocialization of the educational process. Neoliberal education reform, as it developed, did not realise that markets are designed to address the question of how best to produce a good or service, but are not designed to address the question of what to produce. Neoliberal market-based educational reform did not apply economic-based methods with sufficient understanding, leading to unintended, negative consequences as previously outlined. While part of the misunderstanding related to how markets function to allocate goods and services, a further issue arose as a result of the debate about education as a public or private good.

2. Should Education Serve the Individual or the Public?

In order to move the debate forward about how neoliberal markets can provide a *good education*, this thesis will now critically analyse one of the key “shoulds” of education put forth by critics of neoliberal reform, as well as the following conclusion – that education should serve the public and should not be provided by privatised markets.

Research critical of neoliberal reform typically hinges on the point that education is a public good, and therefore individuals should not drive provision (Menashy, 2009; Williams, 2016). Neoliberal educational reform introduced market-based policy that made “education decision-making a matter of consumer choice rather than citizen rights” (Whitty, 2002, p. 47). As a result, education became a private good, serving individuals, rather than a public good serving society. The shift away from serving society meant there would be a subsequent, long-term loss of foundational, long-term societal benefits such as: longer life expectancy, lower consumption of alcohol and tobacco, greater likelihood of engaging in preventative health care, better mental health, greater life satisfaction, less criminality, greater propensity to vote, to volunteer, to trust and tolerate others, increased economic development, reduced population growth, reduced infant mortality rates, increased political stability, along with increased gender equity and adherence to human rights (Ball, 2002; Ladd & Fiske, 2007; Menashy, 2009; Tooley, 2008; Williams, 2016). The argument put forth about why this would happen is that education provided by markets would focus only on consumers’ wants, and not those of society. Education, as a good “essential to the provision of almost every other public good – and to the enjoyment of private goods” must therefore be provided by the public to ensure it is focused on the bigger picture, societal wants (Menashy, 2009, p. 312).

Research critical of neoliberal reform argues that education is a public good that must not be privatised because it is “the mechanism by which the enlightened and knowledgeable of each generation ... pass on their wisdom to their successors” (Williams, 2016, pg. 133). Only those who have already gone through the process of schooling can determine what the process of schooling should look like, and this is something that “cannot be left to the chance of a market’s whim” (Williams, 2016, p. 133). While such arguments are prevalent in the research literature, the argument that education should not be privatised because it is a public good oversimplifies a complex issue.

Arguing that education should not be provided by the market because it is a public good is initially lost given the problem of distinguishing a private good from a public good. This challenge has been “a target of debate since Ancient Greece ... with political philosophers including More, Locke, and Hobbes struggling with associated issues of definition” (Robertson, et al., 2012, p. 1). A good or service is strictly defined in economic terms as a public good if (1) one’s consumption in no way diminishes another person’s ability to consume the good or service (non-rivalrous) and (2) if there is no way for a consumer to be stopped from using a good or service (non-excludable) (Menashy, 2009; Robertson, et al., 2012). The textbook example of a public good is the provision of a lighthouse by the government as a service to a community. A lighthouse can be used by multiple consumers at the same time without any single consumer’s benefit being affected. That is, the use of a lighthouse is non-rivalrous. A lighthouse is also non-excludable, as it is practically impossible to limit one’s consumption thereof. In contrast, if a bicycle is provided as a service for public consumption, one person’s use precludes another person’s use, as only one person can use a bike at a time, making it rivalrous. Further, a bike is an excludable product, as its use can be limited, with a lock, for example, unlike the lighthouse (Menashy, 2009; Robertson, et al., 2012). In economic terms, education is like a bike, as its use is rivalrous and excludable, and not like a lighthouse, leading to the conclusion that education is not technically a public good. Thus, criticism of neoliberal market-based provision of education drawing strictly upon an economics-based argument has little support.

The classic definition of a public good has come to be viewed as overly narrow, and challenges have led to a concept more readily found in reality – that of an impure public good. An impure public good is one which “meets some of the two foundational criteria, typically benefitting both the individual consumer as well as society in general via the positive externalities”

(Menashy, 2009, p. 310). In this relaxed light, education is a fitting example of an impure public good, as one's consumption of education can be limited, and it is rivalrous, as there comes a point when "a higher number of students in a class may impact on the quality of the education being consumed" (Menashy, 2009, pg. 310). While education does fit under this broader definition of a public good, this does not sufficiently explain the need for government provision, suggesting the need to dig deeper yet. A further investigation of markets and market failure will help move the debate of market versus government provision forward and will help determine whether a *good education* can be provided through a marketised setting.

Individuals (both producers and consumers) are directed to pursue their self-interests in a market by "the invisible hand of market prices" so that they will promote the good of the public through the most efficient allocation of resources (Fike & Gwartney, 2015, p. 208). Markets, therefore, serve the public good by allocating resources to produce those goods and services demanded by society in the most efficient way. However, classical economic thought recognises times when there are "systematic conflicts between self-interest ... and getting the most out of the available resources" (Fike & Gwartney, 2015, p. 208). Such situations are known as market failures, and classic economic thought calls for and justifies government intervention to correct such failures.

Market failures occur when there are significant costs or benefits to third parties (externalities) that are not captured (not internalised) in the pricing of the good or service by the consumer or producer within the market setting. Neoclassical economics assumes that individual consumers are willing to pay a price based on their marginal private benefit – the benefit that a consumer directly realises – and not on the marginal social benefit – the total benefit that accrues to all those affected by education (Backhouse & Medema, 2012; Shaw, 2010). When positive externalities exist, as is the case for education, markets do not achieve pareto-efficiency – the point of provision where marginal social benefits and marginal social costs are equal. This means resource allocation is not maximised from a societal viewpoint as the good or service. In this case, education is underprovided because consumers are only demanding an amount based upon their marginal private benefit – the benefits directly accrued to them. Consumers will not demand the amount that maximises marginal social benefit because that higher quantity of provision would require the individual consumer to pay a price higher than the benefit they directly receive. The assumption in economics is that consumers act to

maximise their individual self-interests (King, 2007; Shaw, 2010; Williams, 2016). The result, in the case of education, is that without government intervention, market-based provision will not produce enough education. This argument is valid in ensuring the appropriate total amount of education is provided to society, with some governmental intervention necessary to ensure this. However, the research critical of neoliberal educational reform argues for the governmental, or public, provision of education to ensure the quality of education and that public interests are taught. This goes back to Ball's (2000) false criticism of the narrative set through the *marketisation* of education. Markets can be told what to produce – the narrative, and the quality, can be set. Markets fail in allocating sufficient resources to public goods, thereby underproducing. Markets do not fail in setting what to produce, as that is not in the market's remit.

Markets also tend to fail when access to information by consumers and producers about price and quality is asymmetrical (Ladd & Fiske, 2007, p. 30). Given that parents are typically not well-informed about school choices, and that students are typically not best able to choose for themselves, this lack of information makes for uninformed consumers within the market for education, and this also leads to socially suboptimal levels of production. This issue is further complicated by the fact that education is a service for which the nature of the end product for each student cannot be known at the time of consumption; when a student or parent contracts with a school to educate a child, the end product will be realised in different ways for each student over time frames that vary from the immediate school term to well into the future (Gough, 2009). The incomplete information for education translates into imperfect pricing within a market situation. This leads to the suboptimal allocation of resources and underprovision, according to classical economic theory, which justifies government intervention (King, 2007; Ladd & Fiske, 2007; Lee & Clark, 2013; Robertson, et al., 2012; Shaw, 2010). Once again, without government intervention, market-based provision will not produce enough education. However, while government intervention is necessary to correct the market failure, what needs to be done to offset the externality and provide the optimum level of education is a question left unanswered. Further, even if education is a public good that is underprovided, there is nothing that says government provision is the answer.

The classic economic response to correct market failures is for the government to ensure that the positive externality is internalised by ensuring an increase in the overall amount of education produced and consumed so that all benefits, private and social, are realised (Fike &

Gwartney, 2015; King, 2007; Hazlett, 2000; Lee & Clark, 2013; Robertson, et al., 2012; Shaw, 2010; Vandenberghe, 1999). Simply put, government intervention is justified to ensure more education is consumed and produced than if markets were left to their own devices. However, how governments ensure the market failure is corrected is not prescribed by economic thought. An awareness of market failures exists, and in the case of positive externalities, as in the case of education, government is justified in intervening to ensure an adequate allocation of resources to provide a level of education that will best serve the public.

Critics of neoliberal reform often argue that the justification for government intervention in the provision of education equates to the need for government to provide education. This thesis challenges the correlation between those arguments. That is, even though education is a public good, government provision may not be necessary, let alone recommended, by economic thought. Most significantly, the framing of education as a public good speaks to the need to ensure an overall level of provision that maximises societal benefits, but in no way speaks to the quality, nature, purpose, or philosophical groundings of the educational product actually provided. That is, education as a public good will justify the allocation of a given number of resources, but in no way tells us what that education should look like.

To frame the debate of provision of education differently, one must ask: *Would governments actually be able to do any better?* In addressing this question, we need to consider whether governments are any less fallible than markets, as governments themselves may also tend to fail in the provision of goods and services (Gough, 2009; Vandenberghe, 1999). Modern public choice theory now speaks directly to the existence of government failure and in the cases where market provision is inefficient, it can actually be the case that the correction of market failures through government provision may make the situation worse (Backhouse & Medema, 2012; King, 2007). Government failure is known as a political externality and “one of the most interesting markets within which to apply this theory is K-12 education” (King, 2007, p. 447).

Political externalities and government failure tend to exist due to the inefficiencies of bureaucracies, seen primarily through the high costs of provision of government goods and services, as central planners are too far removed from the day-to-day operations (Fike & Gwartney, 2015; Vandenberghe, 1999). Governments tend to fail in establishing sound fiscal control and efficient allocation of resources due to limited abilities to make efficient decisions, with the overall quality being a function of the intellectual competence of constituent members,

the efficacy of the group's organization, limited diversity within groups, their personal integrity, and their freedom from lobby groups (Backhouse & Medema, 2012; Keech & Munger, 2015).

In making decisions as to the nature of goods or service to provide, as well as the allocation of resources to produce the goods or service, governments tend to fail as the inherent structure incentivises "political decision-makers to pursue their own personal interest...rather than productive use of resources" (Fike & Gwartney, 2015, p. 208). The influence of special interest groups can typically limit government officials from making the best decisions on behalf of society, as can other issues such as short-sightedness, government favouritism, bureaucratic inefficiency, and the limited ability and incentive for voters to be adequately informed (Fike & Gwartney, 2015; Backhouse & Medema, 2012). Further, corruption, born of the self-interested motives of politicians, legislators, and policy makers is typically more prevalent in governments than in the market (Backhouse & Medema, 2012).

There is also a meta-problem with governmental provision of goods and services to correct market failures, as "the task of ensuring that the government supplies the proper quantity and quality of public goods is itself a public good" (Shaw, 2010, p. 242). Government failure in regard to education is heightened because it is paid for indirectly by taxes. Few people have the time, ability, and/or motivation to ensure that government provision is economically efficient when the tax burden is spread out so broadly (Shaw, 2010). This means "monitoring and controlling a publicly provided good suffer from the same incentive problems that caused the undersupply in the first place," leading to an even greater problem (Shaw, 2010, pg. 242).

In looking to move the issue of providing a *good education* forward, we must look past the neoliberal critics' argument that education must be provided by the government because it is a public good. Education can accurately be viewed as a public good "because of its positive spillover effects," and at the same time, it can be seen as a private good to be provided through the market as "purchasers of education benefit directly from what they pay for" (Shaw, 2010, p. 241). Most accurately, the nature of education puts it at "the intersection of two sets of rights, those of the family and those of society," and in moving past the either/or, we may be able to move past the false dichotomy of either government or market provision (Levin, 2000, p. 5).

We cannot solely rely upon individual preferences to determine educational output, as “no one has to answer why or give reasons” as to what is produced (Keech & Munger, 2015, p. 5). On the other hand, if we rely solely upon governmental production, we arrive back at the starting point that spawned neoliberal educational reform. Choosing one or the other “posit[s] a false dichotomy – more government versus more markets” and we need to find a different way forward (Keech & Munger, 2015, p. 3). When looking to resolve the issue of how best to provide education, the real issue may not actually be the “how” of it; rather, to move forward, we need to address the underlying, unresolved issue: What is it that we are trying to achieve? We need to first be grounded in the “why” of education, and first establish the outcome we want to produce, public or private. We will be able to judge the quality of educational output only if we first philosophically ground ourselves in what a *good education* should be.

D. A Good Education

1. Introduction

Neoliberal educational reform was grounded in the desirable intention of providing accountability for the provision of quality education. However, its drive for accountability led to a myopic focus on “the how rather than on the why” (Biesta, 2016, p. 3). In a neoliberal educational paradigm, “means become ends in themselves so that targets and indicators of quality become mistaken for quality itself” (Biesta, 2016, p. 13). Without a grounding in the “why” of education – without first having defined what a *good education* is – neoliberal educational reform provided accountability in schools for an undefined outcome, diminishing the realisation of a *good education*, and begging the question: What is a *good education*?

The goal of this thesis is to evaluate the degree to which the IBDP reflects a good education as provided through market-based conditions in international schools. The *marketisation* of education, per se, may not have caused the negative implications resulting from neoliberal educational reform. It could be the case that with the clear framing of a good education from the outset, markets could provide an appropriate outcome. Having critically examined the research literature in regard to the introduction, application, and impact of economic theory on neoliberal educational reform, the next step is to investigate and establish criteria to determine the degree to which the IBDP realises a good education.

2. Broadly Framing a *Good Education*

The question of what constitutes a good education could well serve as the focus of an entire thesis. It is further recognised that the question of what constitutes a good education needs to be a “central and ongoing concern within educational practise, policy, and research,” now more than ever, as the ends have come to be taken for granted without any conscious decision to embrace them (Biesta, 2016, p. 3). However, this thesis intends to serve the practical goal of evaluating the degree to which markets can provide a good education by investigating international schools offering the IBDP in a market-based setting. The intention is not to engage in an in-depth investigation and evaluation of research literature regarding a good education, nor is the intention to generate a novel set of criteria by which a good education can be evaluated. Instead, to achieve the more pragmatic approach to this thesis, research literature was examined in regard to framing a good education, in order to offer a model through which the quality of the IBDP, offered in market-based international schools, can be evaluated.

In terms of establishing the foundation with which one can evaluate a good education, literature speaks to the significance of schools equipping students with key skills, dispositions, and habits of mind for healthy, meaningful, socially cohesive, and productive lives, both personal and professional (Nussbaum, 2006; Ladd & Fiske, 2007; Plank, 2013; Baltodano, 2012; Biesta, 2016). In terms of qualifying a good education, it can be argued that students must become purposefully engaged in ways that will enable them to acquire the dispositional capacities that will allow for the “critical examination of oneself and one’s traditions for living” (Nussbaum, 2006, p. 388). Such broader dispositional capacities allow for the examination of one’s life, which is of “prime, vital importance and shapes how the acquisition of other skills and knowledge fill into a human’s world view” (Nussbaum, 2006, p. 388). Such abilities not only determine how one engages with their worlds, but “more importantly, determines the purposes for which they will see and interact with their worlds” (Nussbaum, 2006, p. 388).

Nel Noddings, “one of the premier philosophers of moral education,” puts forth a framework for a good education that is “unrivalled for originality of insight, comprehensiveness and coherence” (Bergman, 2004, p. 149). Noddings frames a good education as one that instils an ethic of care through which “the conventional understandings of central constructs in social education such as democracy, citizenship, moral education, interdisciplinary study, and critical thinking” are purposefully broadened and deepened in learners (Thornton, 2018, p. 263). To engage students in a pedagogy grounded in an ethic of care sets a high bar, expecting that “the

greatest obligation of educators, inside and outside formal schooling, is to nurture the ethical ideals of those with whom they come in contact” (Noddings, 1984a, p. 49). Noddings, building on the work Dewey began, sees intelligence being developed socially and argues that all subjects are meant to be taught with a broader framing in mind, as they need to contribute to one’s life beyond school, rather than as ends unto themselves (Noddings, 1989). In order to be able to contribute to one’s life beyond school, a good education produces self-determined learners with a “continued capacity for growth” (Dewey, 1916, p. 57).

Noddings and Dewey ask of an education - “What do the studies signify outside of the schoolroom?” - advocating that our best educators will “place more weight on critical thinking than teaching subject matter” (Thornton, 2018, p. 264). In doing so, Noddings is described as having painted a “richer, brighter vision for high schools” with an approach that “eclipses conventional concerns about violating disciplinary boundaries, preparing students for college, and meeting content standards” (Thornton, 2018, p. 267). Such a framework of a good education challenges the status quo of neoliberal educational reform, calling it out for aiming far too low (Thornton, 2018). Referring back to the research literature evaluated in the sections above, it could be argued that neoliberal educational reform ought to be called out for not aiming at all.

A good education not only recognises learning as the production of subjectivity, but sees this goal as an ethical imperative, as it is through the process of continued, lifelong education that we “remake society and ourselves” (De Lissovoy, 2015, pp. 152-153). Distinguishing a *good education* expects that “students find themselves overtaken, in spite of themselves, by another self – a self that has emerged” as a result of engaging in the process of learning (De Lissovoy, 2015, p. 154). In this sense, a good education is meant to be transformative, allowing a successful learner to become more. A good education goes beyond simply providing students with key skills and knowledge, which could leave students “trained like an animal rather than educated like a human being” (Dewey, 1916, p. 11). A good education is one that equips learners to deal with “the problems of the present and future” by bringing to life an ever-developing person (Dewey, 1938, p. 77).

A good education expects that students develop a freedom of intelligence that will equip them to be successful in an unknown future (Dewey, 1938). Unfortunately, neoliberal educational reform has put in place “initiatives...that focus narrowly on science and technology...rather

than on the formation of the student's critical and imaginative capacities" (Nussbaum, 2006, p. 385). A distinguishing conceptual element of a good education is that it expects learning experiences to "be a moving force that is active and carried out independently by the learner" in order to bring about an "internal change [and] the creation of something new" (Dewey, 1938, p. 69). To do this, a *good education* engages students in individual reflection that "extract[s] the net meanings which are the capital stock for intelligent dealing with further experiences" (Dewey, 1938, p. 87). The fact that the reflective process is individual, combined with the awareness that the knowledge needed to engage in future experiences will also be individual, highlights the fact that the end product of a good education cannot be known ahead of teaching.

A good education could also be broadly framed in terms of an ethic of care, a freedom of intelligence, or providing a moving force. While a good education will likely be framed by such abstractions, there are also more concrete ways. One alternative framing of a *good education* is offered via the European Union's (EU) evaluation of quality education in its member states. The EU has published a strategic framework to monitor the progress in "quality education" that is grounded in sustainable development (SD) (Plesniarska, 2019, p. 1125). The determination of a quality education is "based on a comprehensive approach combining economic, social and environmental issues in a way that ensures their mutual reinforcement" (Plesniarska, 2019, p. 1125).

SD is a long-term process intended to ensure a global consumption of natural resources that will "meet the needs of the current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Plesniarska, 2019, p. 1125). The UN argues that education is crucial for the achievement of SD, with quality education representing a core component of SD (Plesniarska, 2019). The strategic framing of a quality education by the EU in SD recognises the role of education as the main driver of development, being "crucial for the implementation of all the other 16 Goals concerning, among others: health, gender equality, economic growth, responsible consumption and production as well as climate change mitigation" (Plesniarska, 2019, p. 1128). Access to quality education from early childhood through to technical and vocational training, as well as through to tertiary education, not only "increases the number of youth and adults with relevant skills for employment in decent jobs and entrepreneurship," but it also will address broader social issues, such as gender disparities, equality of access to education for all, as well as promoting SD (United Nations, 2015a).

Focusing quality education on SD “reinforces people’s sense of responsibility as global citizens and better prepares them for the world they will inherit” (Buckler and Creech, 2014, p. 28). This can lead to the “breaking of the cycle of poverty, as well as help reduce inequalities, achieve gender equality and live more healthy and sustainable lives” (United Nations, 2018). This will also translate into “the development of countries’ competitiveness [which] is treated as one of the most important elements of the education sector (Beynaghi et al., 2016).

The conceptualization of a good education via SD and the achievement of the UN’s SDG’s offers a pragmatic lens outlining the importance of a good education, and how this will positively contribute to long-term development. Such a conceptualization, however, does not offer guidance for schools in regard to teaching and learning; such a conceptualization of a *good education* does not speak concretely to what happens in classrooms day-to-day. Further, for purposes of this thesis, such a framework as grounded in what are effectively long-term economic goals, framed in a healthier theme of SD, would be unwieldy to manage in evaluating the degree to which the IBDP represents a good education. Moreover, connecting a good education to improved economic competitiveness, even if grounded in SD, feels too close to the econometrics of neoliberal policy reform.

Taking a step back, the chart below compares and contrasts key characteristics revealed through the literature review of a neoliberal education and a good education:

Table 1: Comparing Characteristics of Neoliberal & Good Education

Characteristics of a Neoliberal Education	Characteristics of a Good Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students are objects receiving learning ● Focused on acquisition of objective, quantifiable knowledge as an end. ● Assessment is focused on demonstrating prior acquisition of knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students are subjects of the learning process ● Acquires objective, quantifiable knowledge in order to understand, evaluate, and create further knowledge. ● Assessment is focused on prior acquisition of knowledge to apply in new settings, and create knowledge

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assessment serves as an end for selection, ranking, and accountability. ● Assessment is backward-looking, expecting the reproduction of what was. ● Acquisition of pre-existing knowledge; create opportunities to share mastery of accepted reality. ● Positive, objective. ● Learning experiences solidify students into existing ways of being, thinking, and doing. ● Learning is fundamentally framed as closed-ended. ● End goal is the reception of knowledge. ● Characterised by lower-order thinking skills: comprehension, demonstration, and application. ● Prepares for a foreseeable (pre-seeable) future, based upon an already seen, established past. ● Aims to maintain self and society ● Grounded in maintaining the existing economic paradigm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assessment serves as a tool for accountability, grounded in authentic, real-life applications ● Assessment is forward-looking, using what was and is to generate new knowledge ● Creation of something new in the learner; create opportunities for individuality to emerge ● Normative, subjective. ● Learning experiences challenge students' existing ways of being, thinking, and doing. ● Learning is fundamentally framed as open-ended. ● End goal is the creation of knowledge. ● Recognises the base needs for lower-order thinking as a step to access higher-order thinking skills: analysis, synthesis, and creation. ● Prepares for an unknowable future based upon the critical evaluation, reshaping, and building on of an interpreted past ● Aims to remake self and society ● Challenges the existing economic paradigm to ensure sustainable development
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The broad conceptualizations of a good education offered by Noddings, Nussbaum, Dewey, De Lissoy, or the EU's focus on sustainable development could well be combined to generate a synthesised conceptualization of a good education. Instead, the thesis will move forward by outlining and justifying the adoption of a model that, to a large degree, encapsulates the criteria noted above for a good education, and one that captures certain key elements of a

neoliberal-based education as well. This latter part is significant, as the focus of the thesis is to build on existing strengths and intentions of neoliberal reform, rather than adopt an entirely new paradigm. To move forward, the next section will outline Gert Biesta's conceptualization of a good education in order to use it to evaluate the IBDP as offered in market-based international schools.

3. Biesta's Model of a *Good Education*

a) *Introduction*

Discussions about what philosophically constitutes a *good education* within current educational research and policy "seem to have disappeared" (Biesta, 2016, p. 1). The lack of such discussions is a serious concern, as the absence thereof has allowed the educational output of neoliberal market-based reform to go unchecked. Biesta offers a way beyond an evidence-based model – and an opening toward a *good education* – by embracing the human, subjective elements that neoliberal educational reform tried to move past through technical control. Biesta offers a model grounded in evidence-informed practise as framed by three criteria for a *good education*: (1) *qualification*, (2) *socialization*, and (3) *subjectification*. This model recognises and includes certain key elements of neoliberal educational reform, as framed primarily through his first criterion – *qualification*. However, his model goes further, seeing the acquisition of the first step as necessary to engage in and realise a *good education*.

Education, as conceptually different from learning, is a *teleological process*, one "framed and constituted by purpose," and demanding normative discussions (Biesta, 2012, p. 583). As the focus on effectiveness in schools has become an instrumental value represented by the trend of *learnification*, we have come to "refer to anything educational in terms of a language of learning" (Biesta, 2012, p. 583). Teachers have become "facilitators of learning;" teaching has become the "creation of learning opportunities;" schools are now "learning environments;" students are "learners;" adult education is now referred to as "life-long learning;" and the overall process of education is now "teaching and learning" (Biesta, 2012). Having created a recursively narrowing focus on learning, neoliberal educational reform has continually honed a quantitative definition of success in schools, crowding out the considerations of what a quality education is, but more importantly, the possibility of ever realizing it.

The emergence of *learnification* is grounded in an evidence-based model of practise, intent on creating a "causal model of professional action" where evidence-based interventions are used

to produce pre-determined results as measured through standardised testing (Biesta, 2012, p. 585). Neoliberal measures of accountability employ evidence-based interventions, a paradigm and method adopted from a medical-based model where the focus is on what works, rather than what should be. The goal of evidence-based practise is to “secure a relationship between the intervention (as cause) and its outcomes or results (as effects).” The application of this model to schools has led to educational output being seen as “a fixed product” that emerges through a “smoothly functioning production line” (Biesta, 2016, p. 33). While neoliberal reform was intended to improve schooling by providing market-based systems of accountability, it reconstituted its philosophical base, ultimately promoting a technocratic model of learning at the expense of a *good education*.

The expectation of evidence-based practise in education has become so prevalent that it is the norm for researchers, policy creators, and practitioners to “assume that the only relevant research questions are questions about the effectiveness of educational means and techniques” (Biesta, 2016, p. 29). Best practise under neoliberal reform is “theory established from large-scale experimental studies that have determined causal relationships between educational inputs and outputs” (Biesta, 2016, p. 11). The focus on objective, evidence-based, causal relationships is so extreme that, in the US, “federal funding is only available for research that utilises this particular methodology to generate scientific knowledge about what works” (Biesta, 2016, p. 12). Neoliberal reform has generated a myopic focus on evidence-based learning; in order to move forward, it is imperative to open discussions about our outcomes and establish what constitutes a *good education*.

The following sections outline each of the three criteria, providing the framework through which the quality of education offered in international schools, operating in market-based settings, offering the IBDP can be evaluated.

b) Qualification

In terms of establishing a *good education*, students need to be prepared for their future, and to make this happen, they must have certain foundational skills, along with key subject-specific knowledge, allowing them to engage successfully in their lives beyond school (Biesta, 2012). We expect that a student who has progressed through the typical twelve years of schooling will be equipped with “the knowledge, skills and understandings and often also with the dispositions and forms of judgement that allow them to do something” (Biesta, 2016, p. 20).

Biesta's (2012) model of a *good education* terms this first criterion of a good of education as *qualification*.

Qualification links directly to the positive, objective measures of learning as seen in neoliberal-based educational paradigms. The expectation of a *good education* at a foundational level also asks that students emerge with political literacy, skills for citizenship, and cultural literacy (Biesta, 2016). This educational function is vitally important and "constitutes an important rationale for having state-funded education in the first place" (Biesta, 2016, p. 20). This simple, first level of a *good education* also serves as a steppingstone for students to be able to acquire the next criterion of a *good education* – *socialization*.

c) Socialization

Upon completion of schooling, as well as through the process, students need to be able to fit into their communities, as grounded in the cultural norms that bring their various communities to life (Biesta, 2012). Biesta draws heavily upon the work of Dewey and labels this process and goal of education as *socialization*, noting that it "has to do with the many ways in which, through education, we become part of particular social, cultural and political orders" (Biesta, 2016, p. 20). It is the goal of a *good education* to provide the learning environment in which there can be the "transmission of particular norms and values" (Biesta, 2016, p. 20). It is the role of the school to create educational experiences which will allow students to "imitate or copy the actions of others," with the teachers serving as models (Dewey, 1916, p. 22).

A *good education* instils in students the ability to be members of their immediate communities, recognizing that we are "human beings bound to all other human beings by ties of recognition and concern" (Nussbaum, 2006, p. 389). A *good education* inspires and develops in students an individual narrative imagination of those within their communities, so they are able to fully empathise with others different from themselves, so they are able "to be an intelligent reader of that person's story, and to understand the emotions and wishes and desires that someone so placed might have" (Nussbaum, 2006, p. 390).

Cultural norms, or ways of being and doing, are learned "through a process of transmission...by means of communication of habits of doing, thinking, and feeling from the older to the younger" (Dewey, 1916, p. 6). Within a school setting, it is the community of adult educators who transmit the "ideals, hopes, expectations, standards, [and] opinions" of

society to students in a process of *socialization* (Ibid, p. 6). Dewey (1916) characterises this process as a “constant reweaving of the social fabric,” and points out that this is not an automatic process, and instead is one that requires an explicit “method of transmission which forms the dispositions of the immature” (Ibid, p. 6).

The process of *socialization* is necessary for the “continuous and progressive life of a society” and does not take place by “direct conveyance of beliefs, emotions, and knowledge” (Ibid, p. 16). Instead, it takes place through “the intermediary of the environment...the sum total of conditions which are concerned in the execution of the activity characteristic of a living being (Ibid, p. 16). The acquisition of societal dispositions comes “without conscious intent, as the young gradually partake of the activities of the various groups to which they may belong” (Ibid, p. 16).

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However, achievement of *socialization*, in conjunction with the achievement of *qualification*, is not enough to qualify an education as a *good education*. Limiting the scope of an education at this foundational level would be “a treacherous idea,” as it presupposes that the “acquisition of [such] skills will automatically constitute preparation for their right and effective use under conditions very unlike those in which they were required” (Dewey, 1938, p. 47). Vitrally, we must go further and equip students with a self-determined “continued capacity for growth” (Dewey, 1916, p. 57). This leads to Biesta’s final and defining criterion – *subjectification*.

d) *Subjectification*

National educational systems driven by neoliberal educational reform typically meet the goals of *qualification* and *socialization* (Biesta, 2012). While necessary conditions in realizing a *good education*, they are not by themselves sufficient. A *good education* needs to go further; a *good education* also “expresses an interest in the human being...as subject, not as object” in order to make “a proper distinction between education and training” (Biesta, 2012, p. 586). An education not moving past the criteria of *qualification* and *socialization* leaves a student “trained like an animal rather than educated like a human being” (Dewey, 1916, p. 11). Biesta’s defining third and defining criterion of a *good education* is grounded in shaping experiences that place the student as the subject of the learning process, a term he coins, *subjectification* (Biesta, 2012).

Neoliberal educational policy is based on an evidenced-based paradigm expecting schools “to bring about certain outcomes in a secure way” (Biesta, 2016, pp. 13-14). In Biesta’s view, students are more than static objects of the learning process; they are instead subjects in and of the learning itself (Biesta, 2012). Neoliberal educational reform objectifies students, presupposing “a norm of what it means to be human before the actual manifestation of instances of humanity” (Ibid, p. 586). As a result, measures of academic success in a neoliberal paradigm are predetermined, mandating “what the student must become before giving them an opportunity to show who they are and what they will be” (Ibid, p. 587). An education limited to the goals of *qualification* and *socialization* negates the emergence of the student as an independent subject before the educational process even begins, eliminating any chance to “radically alter our understanding of what it means to be human” (Ibid, p. 587). A *good education* must, instead, see students as individual human beings who are subjects of the learning process, cultivating their agency and independence in the very learning process as well as the learning outcomes (Biesta, 2016).

Learning is an individual experience concerning “the relationship between our actions and their consequences” (Ibid, p. 38). A rich and complete view of education must allow for the subjectivity of individuals within the process. It will accept and embrace that learners will not respond uniformly (Ball, 2009). As a subjective process, the ultimate ends of a *good education* emerge as the result of personal reflection on an individual’s actions (Biesta, 2012). Therefore, an evidence-based conceptualization of education, grounded in past successes, can provide

only insights and warranted assertions about “possible relationships between actions and consequences” (Biesta, 2016, p. 41). Each learning situation is unique, and each learner is unique; therefore, each individual’s learning output will also be unique (Biesta, 2012). A *good education* must recognise this and, more importantly, explicitly have the driving goal to “create openings for subjectivity to emerge” (Biesta, 2012, p. 589). The criterion of *subjectification* expects schools to place self-determination, as opposed to heteronomous determination, as “the central question for modern education” (Biesta, 2016, p. 77).

A *good education* is a “*moving force* that is active and carried out independently by the learner” and leads to “the creation of something new in the learner” (Dewey, 1938, p. 69). This internal change is the result of individual reflection as the learner “extract[s] the net meanings which are the capital stock for intelligent dealing with further experiences” (Dewey, 1938, p. 87). This means that a *good education* must “entail an orientation towards the independence of those being educated” (Biesta, 2012, pp. 584-585). Paradoxically, as the defining criterion of a *good education*, *subjectification* “is best understood as the opposite of the *socialization* function.” *Subjectification* expects students to develop higher-order thinking skills, grounded in critical awareness, and expects them to challenge and change their status quo (Biesta, 2016, p. 21).

Subjectification evolves through a pedagogy of disruption, as schools engage students in experiences that interrupt their “normal ways of being” to provoke *otherness* in the learner (Biesta, 2016, p. 90). In doing so, a *good education* equips and expects students to operate independently and “make use of his understandings without the direction of another” (Biesta, 2016, p. 76). Such a framework “is not a pedagogy that can in any sense guarantee its outcomes,” and overtly recognises that it is ontologically weak (Biesta, 2016, p. 91). In this sense, a *good education* cannot ultimately be subject to the systems of accountability used within a neoliberal, traditional, educational system (Biesta, 2012). To strive for and realise the criterion of *subjectification*, we must recognise and embrace “an element of unpredictability at the heart of education” (Biesta, 2012, pp. 584-585). While seen as a pedagogical weakness in regard to the ways neoliberal educational reform works to provide accountability, this weakness “is at the very same time its existential strength” in striving for a *good education*, as it allows for the student and for society to evolve and become something more than it is (Biesta, 2016, p. 91).

In expecting a *good education* to be open to the unpredictability of learning outcomes and embracing an open-ended view of educational output, a *good education* expects students will acquire “the ability to make a distinction between what is desired and what is desirable” (Biesta, 2012, p. 583). In order to make this distinction, a *good education* must equip students with skills to make such a judgement. In this sense, students need to not only become part of their communities but must be able to recognise the limits of the system where they have been socialised and become action-oriented to affect necessary change (Nussbaum, 2006). A *good education* purposefully develops a healthy resistance, so students critically challenge the very authorities and traditions that socialised them. In this sense, the successful product of a *good education* possesses the desire to live “a life that questions all beliefs, statements, and arguments, and accepts only those that survive reason’s demand for consistency and for justification” (Nussbaum, 2006, p. 388).

A *good education* must realise the goal of equipping students with key knowledge, skills, and content. This goal of *qualification*, while static, and grounded in what was, is essential to allow students the ability to fit into their various communities – to realise the goal of *socialization*. Further, and most importantly, to realise a *good education*, students must become equipped with higher-order critical thinking skills so they can challenge, create, and improve the communities where they have been socialised. A *good education* equips students with skills of critical analysis, then disrupts them to realise what change needs to be brought to life, then empowers and motivates them to affect these changes in self and in others.

A *good education* expects students to pass through the criteria of *qualification* and *socialization* in order to realise the defining criterion of *subjectification*. Paradoxically, schools are expected to effectively “cultivate freedom through coercion” (Biesta, 2012, p. 586). This element of Biesta’s model presents a potential concern. Students are to first engage and acquire key knowledge, content and skills – *qualification*. They also must come to understand, learn, and fit into the various paradigms into which they are being socialised. They must then acquire and employ critical-thinking skills and dispositions to critique, and ultimately change, the systems they have learned to join. In the abstract, this model works; however, Biesta’s model does not address the degree to which those leading this process of cultivating freedom through coercion – the teachers, administrators, and even students’ parents – will be willing, as well as able, to truly allow for something new to emerge and replace their current positions of control.

A previous exploration of the literature review outlined how education can be provided by governments or markets, and how either system faces inherent flaws due to the human element. Government provision needs oversight, for example, as those in charge may be subject to serving political ends over a *good education*. Market provision needs oversight, as it may also be subject to serving the wrong results – financial profit, or grades – instead of a *good education*. In either case, the people providing education within the respective systems have the ability to, and will, alter the realised outcomes as compared to the model outcomes. Biesta's model does not account for, nor does it acknowledge, how teachers, administrators, and educational policy creators will be expected to ensure that students can do more than challenge the status quo but can truly affect change. This thesis considers the degree to which the IBDP, offered in market-based international schools, overcomes this limitation of Biesta's model.

e) Critical Appraisal of Biesta's Model

Biesta's model of a *good education* provides an effective model for this thesis to evaluate the quality of the IBDP; however, there are limits to the model. The combination of Biesta's three criteria outline how a *good education* can be evaluated. While each criterion is a necessary element of a *good education* according to Biesta, the model does not address the way in which they come together as a whole. The model suggests that the criteria are hierarchical, with the defining element of a *good education* seen in *subjectification*. There was a limit faced in this thesis in using Biesta's model when determining how good a *good education* the data showed the IBDP to be. The model does not outline the relative importance of each of the three criterion. The IBDP, for example, could be argued to be a *good education* even though it did not significantly realized *subjectification* because it met the first two criteria so well, realizing two-thirds of a *good education*.

Biesta's model does not specify that there is a linear progression through the three criteria that correlates to quality. The model does not address how a *good education* is seen as sufficiently good in relation to the achievement of respective criterion – is it a cumulative process whereby the attainment of more leads to a better education, or is it the case that all criteria must be achieved? Is it the case that it is a recursive process over time throughout K-12 education, or is it the case that the foundational criteria of qualification and socialization will continue to fuel the realization of subjectification over time? Are there critical levels of the more foundational criteria of qualification and socialization that have to be met such that subjectification will be realized? Further, how does the interplay between the three criteria

affect the overall realization of a good education? That is to say, in outlining the criteria of a good education Biesta does not directly address the degree to which all three of the defining criteria must be met. This limitation is highlighted when the model is applied to the evaluation of a concrete educational program as this thesis has done.

A further limit to Biesta's model emerges when looking at the individual criterion in and of themselves. Biesta broadly outlines the three criteria, giving framing parameters in regards to what each represents; however, the criteria themselves are not concretely defined. There is a benefit in the model being abstract as different educational systems are able to bring their own concrete definitions to the details of *qualification*, *socialization*, and *subjectification*. In not providing concrete details there is a limitation in the model as it also allows for each criterion to be too open to interpretation in content, as well as interpretation in relative importance. *Qualification* in one setting, for example, could be made as simple as being functionally literate in one language and not include the acquisition of other foundational skills in other core subject areas. Or, *qualification* in another setting could necessitate being bilingual, begging the question of whether the acquisition of an additional language is a necessary condition of a *good education*. Connected here is the idea of the relative importance amongst criteria that an educational system would be able to set. For example, is it more important to become bilingual or to acquire key social dispositions?

A final limit to Biesta's model as highlighted from the wholistic evaluation of this thesis is the degree to which the criteria themselves have been shaped, and potentially limited by, the broader societal framework in which they have been conceived. For example, the criteria of *qualification* and *socialization* have been shaped within a neoliberal framework that sees success as equipping students with skills and dispositions to be successful in university and later on in the workforce. This thesis took these parameters into consideration in determining the degree to which the criteria were successfully met. However, these measures of success are not a given and Biesta's model does not explicitly question how the broader neoliberal framework has impacted his definitions of *qualification* and *socialization*. Significantly, without critically challenging the definitions of these two criteria as set within a neoliberal framework, the drive of the first two criteria may end up being directly at odds with the realization of *subjectification*. In the end, who and how the criteria of a *good education* come to be interpreted and defined is something that is left open. This is certainly a strength of Biesta's model, but there are also limitations that must be taken into account.

4. Evaluating the IBDP as a *Good Education* Using Biesta's Model

Biesta's conceptualization of a *good education* expects schools to lead students through a process in which they realise the elements of *qualification*, *socialization*, and finally, *subjectification*. This conceptualization provides the model for this thesis, through which the IBDP offered in market-based international schools is evaluated as a *good education*. No model will be complete, but Biesta's model corresponds with those of other educational philosophers like Noddings, Nussbaum, Dewey, and Ball, and also finds coherence with the model outlined by the EU, through its framework of sustainable development.

A further strength of Biesta's model is that its defining criterion – *subjectification* – expects any concrete model of a *good education* to be eventually challenged and superseded. Biesta's model allows for the continued evolution of any conceptualization of a *good education*, something that neoliberal reform does not, and cannot, allow. Further, if used as a meta-framework, it allows for various educational settings and contexts to fill in the finer details of what it means to realise *qualification* and *socialization* for themselves (for example, national or regional educational systems may have content-specific requirements or demand-given terminology), as long as students are made aware of the models into which they are socialised, and then educated to challenge and improve those very models.

One possible limitation to Biesta's model, if extrapolated to the extreme, is that if we educate students to embrace constant change and then expect them to bring about paradigmatic shifts, the absurd reaction could produce a completely static paradigm. A further limitation, as noted earlier, is that Biesta's model does not address the probability that any model can be corrupted by the humans implementing it. As stated previously, the goal of this thesis is building on neoliberal education reform rather than replacing it; therefore, the thesis will evaluate the degree to which the IBDP provides accountability, which addresses this inherent limitation of Biesta's model.

While there are limits to Biesta's model, it provides a reasonable framework through which the IBDP can be evaluated as a *good education*. Further, the prime purpose of the thesis is focused on whether markets are able to provide a *good education*, in contrast to merely defining a perfect education. If the thesis suggests that markets can provide a *good education* according to Biesta's model, later discussions can open about how a *good education* can be improved.

Again, the goal is to build on neoliberal educational reform and its desire for accountability. This thesis will provide an indication about whether markets should continue to be included in the debate about best practises for providing a *good education*.

In summary, the key elements of Biesta's model that are used to determine the degree to which the IBDP represents a *good education* are noted here:

Table 2: Key Elements of Criteria of Biesta's Model and Avenues to Evaluate

Criteria	Key Elements	Key Avenues for Evaluation
<i>Qualification</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are educated to acquire key knowledge, skills, and content to prepare them for their next stage of life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which students are prepared to be academically successful in university
<i>Socialization</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are educated to acquire key dispositions to fit into the social structures and communities in their next stage of life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which students are prepared to be successfully integrated socially in university
<i>Subjectification</i>	<p>Students are educated by disruptive learning experiences to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be active, independent learners, with agency over their learning Acquire higher-order critical thinking skills Be critically aware and self-reflective Actively challenge self, others, and their communities Create knowledge to find new and novel solutions for the improvement of self, other, and their communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which students are Active and independent learners with agency over their learning Acquire higher-order critical thinking skills Critically aware and self-reflective Actively challenge self and community to improve Engaged in the creation of knowledge to improve self and community

E. Summary

The next chapter of this thesis outlines the research design and methods by which its premise is evaluated. The following five research questions are used to evaluate the overall treatise of the thesis:

Research Question #1:

To what degree does the IBDP in its theoretical design represent a good education according to Biesta's model?

The purpose of this research question is to evaluate if the IBDP design provides the foundations of a *good education*. Biesta's criteria for a *good education* are used to evaluate this research question. This question is significant, as it will show whether the theoretical design aligns with a *good education*, and will allow the purpose of *RQ#5*. *RQ#1* also shows a paucity in the research, as evidenced by the limited investigations regarding this topic.

Research Question #2:

To what degree does the IBDP offered in international schools provide accountability for the quality of education?

The purpose of this research question is to establish the degree the IBDP provides accountability for the quality of its education. This question is significant, as it is a primary goal of neoliberal educational reform to ensure accountability. The goal of the thesis is to build on neoliberal reform. To persuade those grounded in neoliberal reform, it will be significant to show that an alternate system provides means of accountability. If it is the case that the IBDP represents a *good education* and there are measures of accountability, it will be much more productive bringing advocates of neoliberal reform into discussions of how to address its limits by investigating questions about the desired quality of educational output.

Research Question #3:

To what degree is the IBDP offered in international schools adversely impacted by its measures of accountability?

The purpose of this research question is to establish whether negative implications found in the neoliberal educational paradigm exist within IBDP schools. Again, the goal is to build on

neoliberal reform. To do so, the research must investigate whether the negative implications of neoliberal reform are present, or are at least minimised, and demonstrate its findings to critics who cite the negative implications. This research question also serves to address a gap in the research literature, as there are limited sources investigating this topic. Anecdotal evidence exists about the degree to which the IBDP teaches to the exam, as do other national systems, but there is little literature formally investigating this claim. The results of this research question will be significant in balancing the degree to which there are benefits of the IBDP.

Research Question #4:

To what degree does the IBDP offered in international schools prepare students for university?

The purpose of this research question is to establish the degree to which the IBDP provides a *good education* in regard to the basic elements of *qualification* and *socialization*. Students graduating from a quality high school are expected to be prepared for their next step. This question is significant to help ensure a measure of accountability, which is also a core component of Biesta's model. This research question anticipates that the IBDP will meet this expectation, but this cannot be definitively assumed.

Research Question #5:

To what degree does the IBDP offered in international schools realise a good education according to Biesta's model?

The purpose of this final, and most important, research question is to evaluate the degree to which the IBDP provides a *good education*, with the focus on the criterion of *subjectification*. This thesis is grounded in examining the quality of education realised by the IBDP. The focus of this question is examining the degree to which the theoretical design of a *good education* is practically realised in market-based international schools any better than the national exam-based systems in the US or UK. There is a significant absence in the research literature when considering this research question, as there are few, if any, sources evaluating the IBDP on such criteria.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

A. Introduction

While the research literature speaks to the negative impacts of neoliberal educational reform, it is unclear whether *marketisation* itself has led to the negative impacts, and whether a *good education* can be provided through markets. This chapter presents the research methodology to evaluate the degree the IBDP in market-based international schools provides a *good education* as measured by Biesta's criteria for a *good education*. The paradigmatic stance in which the research is framed is revealed alongside the research methodologies that were used to collect, present, and analyse the data.

B. Research Paradigm

The “set of methods and procedures used to collect, analyse, and measure variables in the research problem being explored or examined” (Alavi, et al., 2018, p. 529) of this thesis engages through the broad lenses of both *technical* and *cultural research* (De Vries, 1990; Biesta, 2016). By engaging through a *technical research lens*, the thesis realises the goal of being “a producer of means, strategies and techniques to achieve given ends” (Biesta, 2016, p. 44). If the IBDP represents a *good education* as seen through the research, the thesis will provide a strategic, *technical* plan for other school systems to work toward realising a *good* (or better) *education*. At the same time, the thesis engages in *cultural research* as it serves the role of “providing different interpretations, different understandings and imaginings of social reality” (Biesta, 2016, p. 45). A purpose of the thesis is to “help educational practitioners acquire a different understanding of their practise” (Biesta, 2016, p. 45). By investigating the rise and impact of neoliberal educational reform, this thesis highlights the need to make explicit the underlying beliefs and values of a *good education*. Through the critical evaluation of the dominant neoliberal framework, the thesis not only identifies gaps in policy, but “envisages opportunities for action where we did not envisage them before,” serving the goal of cultural research (Biesta, 2016, p. 45).

Neoliberal educational reform is grounded in a positive paradigm, evidenced by its desire to provide objective, quantifiable measures of accountability (Greenwood & Kathryn, 2012). The use of evidence-based interventions based upon the scientific method and the use of standardised test results to prove efficacy by neoliberal policy makers make clear their view of an objective, absolute, singular, independent reality – a reality in which “the one and only truth is out there waiting to be discovered by objective and value-free inquiry” (Feilzer, 2010, p. 6).

Research within this paradigm is grounded in quantitative measures that collect and analyse objective, numerically based data in a value-free and neutral manner (Feilzer, 2010; Leech, et al., 2010; Harrits, 2011; Shannon-Baker, 2016; Mertens, 2010; Alise & Charles, 2010; Schoonenboom & Creamer, 2018). The initial intention was to promote accountability in education, but the unintended consequence was an epistemological paradigm shift. Given that the framing of neoliberal educational reform in the positive paradigm has led to the negative implications outlined in the literature review, this thesis will be situated in a constructivism, or interpretivism research paradigm based on the premise that “there is no such thing as a single, objective reality,” thereby favouring qualitative research methods (Feilzer, 2010, p. 6).

The constructivist paradigm sees reality as something that is co-constructed, and this qualitative approach is “committed to multiple views of social reality whereby a researcher’s respondent becomes the expert” (Hesse-Biber, 2010, pg. 455). Given the overarching question of this thesis, and its goal to examine the normative issue of what constitutes a *good education*, as well as the degree to which the IBDP realises a *good education*, a research paradigm valuing multiple views is imperative. The degree to which an education is considered good by students, parents, teachers, and administrators “is not something independent of individual perceptions but is created through social interactions of individuals with the world around them” (Hesse-Biber, 2010, p. 455).

The defining feature of a *good education* is Biesta’s concept of *subjectification* and it places students as subjects of the learning process and makes the end product of teaching and learning immeasurable. In such a paradigm, the necessary pedagogy of disruption is labelled a weak curriculum precisely because it cannot be objectively measured. The constructivist research paradigm “privileges the exploration of the process of human meaning making” (Hesse-Biber, 2010, p. 455). The concept of meaning making is of paramount importance for this thesis, as a key goal is to challenge the positivistic nature of neoliberal educational policy that has come to quantify and objectify learning. Qualitative research methods are seen to be “more faithful to the social world than quantitative methods ... [as] they allowed data to emerge more freely from context” (Symonds & Gorard, 2010, p. 123). Therefore, to test the degree to which the IBDP represents a *good education*, this thesis embraces a constructivist research paradigm as its guiding framework.

C. Research Design

1. Introduction

This section outlines the techniques and procedures used for selecting, collecting, organising, and analysing data to determine the degree to which market-based international schools offering the IB Diploma Programme provide a *good education* (Harrits, 2011; Schoonenboom & Creamer, 2018). The first part outlines and justifies the rationale for using mixed methods research, then explains the three techniques used to collect data – a secondary document analysis, a questionnaire, and a series of interviews. The section outlines the ways in which the data is reported, analysed, and concludes with key ethical considerations about carrying out the research design.

2. Mixed Methods Research

The normative nature of this thesis means a constructivist approach allows respondents' multiple views to shape and create a fuller evaluation of the question (Hesse-Biber, 2010; Feilzer, 2010). At the same time, certain sub-research questions will be better addressed through the efficiency and objectivity of quantifiable data (Greenwood & Kathryn, 2012). As such, the research design will integrate the two major methodological approaches: quantitative and qualitative, thereby using a mixed methods research (MMR) design to collect, analyse, and present findings drawn from the data (Harrits, 2011; Schoonenboom & Creamer, 2018).

An MMR design is an eclectic approach that is *inclusive, pluralistic, and complementary* (Symonds & Gorard, 2010, pg. 123). In combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, the research design for this thesis allows for greater breadth and depth of understanding of complex and interrelated elements constituting a *good education*, as framed by Biesta's criteria of *qualification, socialization, and subjectification*. The use of varied methods increases the thesis's ability for the corroboration of findings as it also looks to evaluate the degree to which the IBDP provides measures of accountability for the quality of education provided (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007). Given the multifaceted nature of the thesis's research, MMR allows for the targeted use of "quantitative and qualitative strategies in order to thoroughly investigate the phenomena of interest," (Teddle, et al., 2012, p. 776). MMR "provides a variety of choices, options, and approaches to consider," and three methods will be employed in this design: a secondary document analysis, a questionnaire, and interviews (Wheeldon, 2010, p. 87). The integration of the three techniques allows for a fuller way to frame and

conduct research, allowing for the thesis to move past the roadblock of defining truth and reality in an absolute sense as either A or B (Symonds & Gorard, 2010; Alise & Charles, 2010; Teddlie, et al., 2012; Feilzer, 2010).

The thesis's overarching research question evaluates the degree to which the IBDP represents a *good education* within the market-based setting of international schools offering the IBDP. The five research questions below are used to evaluate the overall hypothesis of the thesis, and the mixing of research methodologies through MMR allows for complementary research questions to be investigated (Schoonenboom & Creamer, 2018). The thesis employs an MMR design, as it allows for "a more complex understanding of a phenomenon that would otherwise not have been accessible by using one approach alone" (Shannon-Baker, 2016, p. 321).

RQ#1: *To what degree does the IBDP in its theoretical design represent a good education according to Biesta's model?*

RQ#2: *To what degree does the IBDP offered in international schools provide accountability for the quality of education?*

RQ#3: *To what degree is the IBDP offered in international schools adversely impacted by its measures of accountability?*

RQ#4: *To what degree does the IBDP offered in international schools prepare students for university?*

RQ#5: *To what degree does the IBDP offered in international schools realise a good education according to Biesta's model?*

a. Research Stage 1

Stage one of the research design employed a secondary document analysis and is designed to present and analyse findings in regard to ***RQ#1***. While it was expected that the IBDP meets Biesta's criteria of a *good education* in its theoretical design, this could not be taken for granted. If the secondary document analysis found that the IBDP didn't meet the criteria of a *good education* in design, there would have been no point in continuing investigating the further ***RQ's***, further explaining the first stage of the research design beginning with a secondary

document analysis. Key IBDP publications outlining requirements for authorisation were used for the secondary document analysis. Biesta's criteria of a *good education* were used to frame the collection, presentation, and analysis of findings as drawn from the documents in order to evaluate *RQ#1*.

b. Research Stage 2

Stage two of the research design employed a quantitative questionnaire to present and analyse findings for *RQ#s 2, 3, and 4*. These three *RQ's* represent necessary conditions about the overarching premise of the thesis. Specifically, to build on neoliberal educational reform, the IBDP needs to provide clear measures of accountability (*RQ#2*), needs to avoid the negative impacts found in neoliberal educational reform (*RQ#3*), and needs to prepare students for university, as evaluated through Biesta's first two criteria of a *good education*, *qualification* and *socialization* (*RQ#4*).

c. Research Stage 3

Stage three of the research design employed an interview. The interview was developed *sequentially*, or as part of a *two-phase design*, in which qualitative in-depth interviews were designed to follow initial quantitative data collection. This allowed for "the flexibility to adapt [one] stage to the findings from the [previous] research stage" (Feilzer, 2010, p. 10). The use of MMR in this way also allowed for the inclusion of a large, initially staged, quantitative tool to help select a sub-sample for the qualitative component, and better ensures that both components are directly linked (Hesse-Biber, 2010).

Part one of the interview was designed to collect corroborative qualitative data in regard to *RQ#s 2, 3, and 4*, as determined after the culmination of the second stage. Part two of the interview was the main focus and is designed to collect qualitative data to present and analyse findings for *RQ#5*.

The qualitatively based interviews allowed for the conceptualization of a *good education* to be investigated in multi-faceted layers, as determined by the elements that define Biesta's concept of *subjectification* (Riazi, 2016; Shannon-Baker, 2016; Greenwood & Kathryn, 2012; Hesse-Biber, 2010; Smith, et al., 2016).

d. Summary of Research Stages

The table below outlines the research methods used in regard to each of the five research questions:

Table 3: Overview of Research Design

Research Stage	Research Method	Research Question	Purpose
1	Secondary Document Analysis	<i>RQ#1</i>	Determine degree to which IBDP meets criteria of a <i>good education</i> in design
		<i>RQ#2</i>	Determine degree to which IBDP provides accountability
2	Questionnaire	<i>RQ#3</i>	Determine degree to which IBDP generates negative implications seen in neoliberal reform
		<i>RQ#4</i>	Determine degree to which IBDP prepares students for university
3	Interview	<i>RQ#5</i>	Determine degree to which IBDP realises criteria of a <i>good education</i> in practise

3. Data Collection

a. Secondary Document Analysis

The secondary document analysis allowed for the evaluation of ***RQ#1*** in order to first determine the degree to which the IBDP, in its theoretical design, meets Biesta's three criteria of a *good education*. A secondary document analysis was efficient and less time-consuming than other research methods, as it requires data selection rather than data collection. Further, the data that is contained in the key IBDP documents has essentially already been collected, meaning that the only part that remains is analysis. A further benefit was that data analysis offers ease in terms of availability and selection (Bowen, 2009). In regard to the IBDP, the key IBDP documents used for the analysis are prescribed elements of the programme that need to be formally met before a school can be authorised.

The thesis drew upon the authorisation process of becoming an IBDP school. In order to become authorised to offer the IBDP, any school must meet key expectations of the IB. The meeting of these expectations is externally validated through a multi-year application process, which culminates with an on-site authorisation visit. Over the application process, the school is tasked with showing that they understand key expectations of the IBDP and putting

structures in place to meet them. That which needs to be understood and brought to fruition in order to become authorised is formally outlined in the following foundational IBDP publications:

- *Diploma Programme: From principles into practise*, IB (2015)
- *Diploma Programme assessment principles and practise*, (IB 2004)
- *Creativity, action, service guide*, IB (2008)
- *Extended essay guide*, IB (2013b)
- *Grade Descriptors*, IB (2014)

The documents were analysed in turn through Biesta's three lenses representing the criteria of a *good education* - *qualification*, *socialization*, and *subjectification*. Key information from the documents that spoke directly to each of the three criteria were compiled to present in the data reporting section to fuel the data analysis. An overall assessment was informed via the data collected, indicating overall the degree to which the IBDP meets the criteria for a *good education* in its theoretical design.

b. Questionnaire

i. Overview

The second phase of data collection for this thesis employed a questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire was to collect data to evaluate **RQ's 2, 3, and 4**, as well as inform the creation of the final data collection method – the interview. The efficiency and efficacy of a larger-scale, quantitatively based questionnaire served this purpose well. As noted above, the questionnaire was staged ahead of the interview in order to collect data to inform the nature of the interview questions.

ii. Questionnaire Design

Questionnaire design is of paramount importance, with issues of question formatting, graphic layout and 'optimal routing strategies' contributing directly to measurement accuracy, and therefore also contributing directly to the accuracy of conclusions that can be drawn from the data (Sanchez, 1998). A major benefit of a questionnaire is that a large number of respondents can be accessed in an efficient manner. A second main benefit of this questionnaire is that it was designed to be anonymous in terms of respondent, as well as school setting, so that there is a greater chance that respondents will be direct in expressing their opinions.

Once the questions were transferred into SurveyMonkey, it was piloted by six volunteers whose feedback was then used to further improve the questionnaire.

The questionnaire begins collecting general demographic data with its first seven questions. The questions generate data in regard to location of the school, length of time the school has offered the IBDP, length of time the respondent has worked with the IBDP, as well as the degree to which the school in which respondents work covers their costs through tuition paid directly by families. These initial questions to be completed by the respondents will be used to generate data to evaluate the validity of their responses. For example, the greater the experience a respondent has working with the IBDP, the greater the trust that can be placed in the responses. Further, the longer a school has offered the IBDP, the greater the chances of it bringing it to life with greater integrity to the IBDP's foundational vision as published in its guiding documents. Finally, demographic data in regard to how the school is funded is crucial to establish whether the school is operating in a market-based structure.

Beyond the initial questions focused on generating demographic data, the questions have respondents respond to statements by noting the degree to which they agree with the given statement. Respondents choose from a six-point Likert Scale with the following options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Somewhat Agree, Agree, and Strongly Agree. Many of the questions are structured for respondents to indicate answers from various viewpoints. An example is seen here:

* 24. The acquisition of the Learner Profile dispositions is an integral part of teaching and learning in:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
my classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
the school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questions 8 through 15 of the questionnaire were grounded in collecting data for **RQ#2**, as focused on issues of accountability. The questions began by priming respondents with the various forms of evidence available that schools could use to provide quality assurances of teaching and learning. Respondents were then asked to evaluate what their schools use as evidence for quality assurance, as well as make overall judgements within their context of the level of accountability provided by the IBDP. The final question of this set is seen here:

* 15. Overall, across stakeholders in my school there are a variety of appropriate sources of evidence to make sound judgments of the quality of teaching and learning in the IBDP.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Somewhat Disagree Somewhat Agree Agree Strongly Agree

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Comments (as appropriate):

Respondents were provided the opportunity to provide qualitative data to give further context to their overall judgement, as necessary.

Questions 16 through 26 of the questionnaire were designed to generate data for **RQ#3**, which focuses on determining the degree to which the IBDP as offered in international schools is adversely impacted by its measures of accountability. The questions looked at whether, as well as the degree to which, there is an over-emphasis on the quantification of learning within the IBDP. Further, the questions looked at the impact of having external measures of accountability, as the IBDP does, on the learning environment day to day in the classroom for teachers, as seen through the impact on pedagogy and student-teacher relations. A key focus here was the degree to which exam grades as used as a measure of accountability hinder the IBDP's ability to provide a *good education*. One such question from this set is here:

* 22. I feel limited in my ability to adapt my teaching to the individual learning needs of my students because of pressures to prepare students for the IBDP final exams.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Somewhat Disagree Somewhat Agree Agree Strongly Agree

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

The questionnaire ends with two final questions designed to generate data for the **RQ#4** which investigated the degree to which the IBDP prepares students for university. The hypothesis for this RQ is clearly grounded in extensive professional practise. The testing of this question is necessary, but as it is almost assured, only two questions to generate data were allocated to it. A complete version of the questionnaire can be seen in the appendices.

iii. Data Sample for the Questionnaire

In regard to data sources for the questionnaire, it was decided to draw upon teachers, IBDP Coordinators and administrators working in market-based international schools offering the

IBDP. For the questionnaire, the goal was to obtain at least 20 respondents from at least four different international schools, each operating in a market-based setting and each offering the IBDP. The goals of recruiting participants for the questionnaire are outlined below as metrics of success in meeting the goals:

Table 4: Summary of Target Data & Realised Data for Questionnaire

Targets for Data Sample	Data Sample Realised
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at least 80 respondents • Respondents have experience with IBDP • at least four different country settings • Respondents have experience in international education • Draw upon a range of school sizes, as noted by number of students in the IBDP • Schools have long-term experience implementing IBDP • Respondents work in market-based international schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 89 respondents • 43.8% > 10 years' experience • 75.2% > 6 years' experience • 24.7% < 5 years' experience • 13 countries • 66.3% > 10 years' experience • 89.9% > 6 years' experience • 1.12% < 40 students • 6.74% 41-80 students • 44.94% 81-120 students • 35.96% 121-160 students • 3.37% 161-200 student • 7.87% > 200 students • 57.3% > 15 years' experience • 74.1% > 11 years' experience • 95.4% > 6 years' experience • 89.9% of respondents work in schools where fees cover all operating costs • 91% are non-profit

c. Interviews

i. Overview

The final phase of data collection for this thesis employed the research method of interviewing. The first purpose of the interview was to seek further data based upon the analysis of the data collected from the questionnaire focus on evaluating *RQ#’s 2, 3, and 4*. The analysis of *RQ#’s 2, 3, and 4* based upon the data obtained from the questionnaire may highlight the need for

more in-depth data or clarification of the questions. The first part of the interview will allow for further probing.

The main purpose of the interview was to collect data in order to evaluate **RQ#5**. A series of questions was framed in order to establish the degree the IBDP realises a *good education* as offered in market-based international schools. As noted above, the framing research paradigm of this thesis is constructivist in nature, because the distinguishing feature of a *good education* is grounded in subjectivity. The selection of interviews as part of a MMR design was selected as the data collection technique, as it is open-ended and allows for a richer collection of data.

ii. Interview Design

The first part of the interview began with three questions relating directly to **RQ#’s 2, 3, and 4**. The first question was structured around the degree to which the measures of accountability in the IBDP within the school where the interviewee works are appropriate in providing quality assurance of teaching and learning (**RQ#2**). The second question of the interview was structured around the degree to which the measures of accountability at the school help or hinder the respondent’s ability to engage students in best educational practises. The questions in the questionnaire drew out data about (**RQ#3**) the respondent’s ability to be innovative and creative in the classroom, know and adapt teaching and learning to students’ individual needs, and engage students in student-centred, inquiry-based learning. The third question of the first part of the interview is structured around the degree the IBDP prepares students for university, academically and socially (**RQ#4**).

The second, and main, part of the interview consisted of a series of questions created to collect data for the analysis of **RQ#5**. Six questions draw out the degree the IBDP creates and expects a learning environment in which the distinguishing criterion of *subjectification* can emerge in students. The questions sought insights from IBDP practitioners in terms of the ways students are expected and able to show independence and agency in their learning, as well as ways students are actively engaged to become subjects of the learning. One question was specific in targeting the idea of a *good education* consisting of a pedagogy of disruption, asking for data about the ways the IBDP purposefully seeks to challenge students’ existing conceptualizations of self and their worlds. The final three questions of the interview were designed to generate data about the ways students are taught and expected to be critically aware of self, other, and society, and expected to act upon self-generated learnings to affect change.

iii. Data Sample for the Interview

The interview was designed to take place after the questionnaire and the final question of the questionnaire asks if respondents would be willing to engage in the interview. This means the participants for the interview were drawn from the respondents of the questionnaire.

Those interested in participating in the interviews were drawn into three distinct groups – teachers, IBDP Coordinators, and administrators – and the research design planned for three members from each group to be interviewed. Establishing three distinct groups of interviewees allowed for the purposeful collection of more diverse data, which in turn allowed for greater analysis through the consideration of the three distinct stakeholder groups. The distinct data sources provided greater validity for the thesis' findings, as the IBDP Coordinators and administrators had a broader view of students' experiences within the IBDP and the degree to which it represents a *good education*. Teachers are typically more focused on their students from a singular vantage point predominantly determined from their subject-specific interactions. Teachers are, of course, able to see students holistically, but may still be inclined to see student success as based upon students' results, and therefore could be somewhat limited in the breadth and overall impact of the IBDP as a *good education*. In comparison, IBDP Coordinators and administrators are charged with interacting with students holistically, beyond any given subject, and leading and managing the IBDP writ large. A core element of IBDP Coordinators' and administrators' jobs is to be aware of the degree to which students' daily schooling experiences are providing a *good education*, looking beyond academic achievement in any one subject. Criteria such as social and emotional development, future career aspirations, university fit and acceptance, as well as meeting one's potential, all factor into the roles of counsellors and administrators in international schools offering the IBDP, and thereby made them valuable data sources for this thesis in determining the degree to which the IBDP represents a *good education*.

iv. Data Storage for the Interviews

In regard to the interviews, each respondent's answers were recorded. Following the interview, audio recordings were listened to and summary notes taken to allow for the collation and analysis of the data. The interviews were transcribed to allow for a full analysis.

4. Criteria of Judgement

The purpose of this section is to assess the quality of the research design and methodological procedures in order to “make the study more powerful and more representative of the problem under investigation” (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016, p. 3).

The first stage of the research design was a secondary document analysis, and this method “is often used in combination with other research methods as a means of triangulation” (Bowen, 2009, p. 28). The combination of methodologies within the research design adds confirmability, credibility, and transferability to the overall findings (Bowen, 2009; Denzin, 1970; Eisner, 1991). The secondary document analysis was used to address *RQ#1* and determine the degree to which the IBDP represents a *good education* in its theoretical design according to Biesta’s criteria. The purpose of this research question was to help ensure that the IBDP does not simply realise a *good education* in practise, but rather through purposeful design. The investigation of the research question was necessary in support for the overarching research question, and the use of an alternative research method added credibility to the overall findings as it drew upon a different method of research. Rather than relying upon the same data sources that were used for each of the questionnaire and the interviews, the inclusion of more documents as drawn upon the key publications of the IBDP increased the objectivity and therefore the quality of the findings.

The secondary document analysis “entails finding, selecting, appraising (making sense of), and synthesising data contained in documents” (Bowen, 2009, p. 28). In order to increase the confirmability and credibility of the secondary document analysis, the following suggested steps were undertaken:

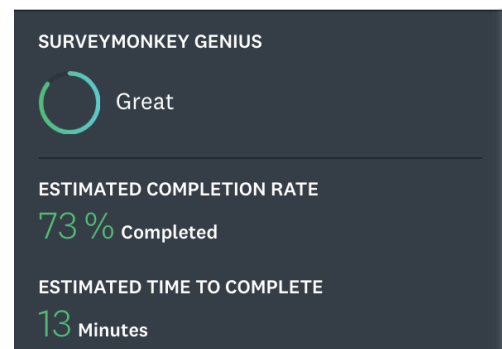
- determine the relevance of documents to the research problem and purpose;
- determine the authenticity, credibility, accuracy, and representativeness of the selected documents;
- assess the documents for completeness, and
- consider the original purpose of the document – the reason it was produced, the target audience, as well as the producer (Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, & Sechrest, 1966, as cited in Bowen, 2009, p. 32).

The documents chosen for the analysis are prescribed elements necessary to meet the IBDP authorisation process, indicating their relevance in being included for analysis. As officially

published documents of the IBDP, they are authentic, credible, accurate, and complete. Their very purpose is to ensure coherence and compliance in the authorisation process, and therefore increases the trustworthiness of the findings.

The second stage of the research design employed a questionnaire to generate quantitative data to analyse and present findings for *RQ#’s 2, 3, and 4*. In terms of assessing the reliability of the data, “the accuracy of measurement procedures” was enhanced through the extensive testing of the survey design itself (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016, p. 3). The questionnaire was tested on numerous occasions with single users as well as numerous occasions with multiple users, in each of the iterations of the questionnaire design. Further, the trials were conducted across various platforms of delivery, including a Google Document, a Google Form, and finally through Survey Monkey.

Feedback across the trials was collected in regard to the purpose of each question, clarity of each question, ease of navigation of the survey instrument, completion rate, as well as overall time taken to complete the survey. Survey Monkey offers analytics, and the overall design gave an overall rating of ‘Great,’ and noted an estimated completion rate of 73% and an estimated time of completion of 13 minutes. After more than 20 iterations, the questionnaire was launched through Survey Monkey.



In the end, the target number of respondents was surpassed. Overall, the testing and refining of the design quality, in combination with the high completion rate, generated confidence in the accuracy of the measurement procedures and in the data produced for analysis.

In terms of the validity of the data from the questionnaires as seen as an assessment of “the relevance of the collected data for answering the research questions,” the nature of *RQ#’s 2, 3, and 4* are purposefully not nuanced (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016, p. 3). The goal for *RQ#’s 2, 3, and 4* is to ensure that the basic elements of a *good education* are met as seen through (1) a clear degree of accountability, (2) an avoidance of the main negative manifestations of neoliberal educational reform, and (3) minimum level of foundational educational preparation as seen by preparing students for university. *RQ#’s 2, 3, and 4* represent the minimum requirements of a *good education* as expected in neoliberal reform as well as through Biesta’s criteria, and as they expect this minimum level, they are highly anticipated to be found in the

IBDP. Given this, the analysis of data to present findings for *RQ#’s 2, 3, and 4* are grounded in a basic descriptive statistical analysis based upon overall percentages. The questions in the survey instrument are direct and overall percentages are sufficient in answering *RQ#’s 2, 3, and 4*. As such, the quality of the quantitative inferences drawn from the data (internal validity) is sufficient.

External validity is another measure of quality of the quantitative research methods used to generate findings for *RQ#’s 2, 3, and 4* and it “relates to the extent the study results can be generalised to a larger population” (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016, p. 3). The demographic information collected from the questionnaire suggests the external validity for findings is also sufficient, as based upon the following:

- the overall response rate of 89 respondents
- the range of country settings the data is drawn from being 13
- the range of school sizes
- 74.1%% of the schools have more than 6 years’ experience with the IBDP
- 89.9% of the respondents have more than 6 years’ experience teaching internationally
- 75.2% of the respondents have more than 6 years’ experience with the IBDP

Given the reliability of the instrument, the demographic information gives strong evidence of the quality of the external validity of the findings.

The third and final stage of the research design employed interviews to collect qualitative data to present findings on the defining research question, *RQ#5*. At a broad level, the use of MMR enhances the quality of research as one type of data collection not only compensates for the weakness of the other, but also enhances the validity and reliability of research findings by highlighting, and therefore allowing for, the addressing of inconsistent results (Hesse-Biber, 2010; Small, 2011; Smith, et al., 2016; Symonds & Gorard, 2010; McKim, 2017). Triangulation through MMR not only promotes confidence in the integration and analysis of data, but also helps address biases and limitations inherent to a singular methodology (Symonds & Gorard, 2010). In the case of the thesis, staging the interviews after the surveys purposefully allows for the collection of data to (1) highlight questions that may have been poorly framed in the questionnaire, (2) better understand and divergent data points, and (3) allow the data set from the interviews to place different explanatory value on different

responses (Feilzer, 2010; Symonds & Gorard, 2010; Alavi, et al., 2018; Fetters, et al., 2013; Smith, et al., 2016). This not only helps increase the quality of findings for **RQ#’s 1-4** through the questions posed in the first part of the interviews, but also shape the second part of the interviews by adjusting questions to answer **RQ#5** based upon findings from the first two stages of research. In this way, the varied research methodologies employed across the thesis work in parallel to increase confidence in the findings as qualitative data can assess the validity of quantitative data collected, with quantitative data having helped generate qualitative questions, allowing for *synergistic understandings*, while at the same time offsetting the limitations of only relying upon one of qualitative or quantitative methods (Alavi, et al., 2018; Greenwood & Kathryn, 2012; McKim, 2017; Fetters, et al., 2013).

The nine people interviewed in stage three of the research design were drawn from those who completed the questionnaire. The research methodology therefore employs a *nested design* whereby multiple data types are collected from the same actors, allowing “for complementary designs to penetrate deeper into [the] overall study” (Small, 2011, p. 69). This allowed for “reflections on the limitations of the survey questions,” and enhanced the research as the third stage allowed for the analysis to “consider what survey respondents actually mean or what they are thinking about when answering Likert scale-type questions” (Feilzer, 2010, p. 11). The *nested design* allows the thesis to “seek convergence and corroboration through the use of different data sources and methods...and guard against the accusation that a study’s findings are simply an artifact of a single method, a single source, or a single investigator’s bias” (Bowen, 2009, p. 28).

The quality of findings based upon the qualitative research method of an interview can be framed by the term *trustworthiness*, seen through “the criteria that guide researchers in producing the findings that can be accepted as persuasive and worth paying attention to by others” (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016, pg. 6). A defining element of *trustworthiness* is the notion of credibility, referring to “the extent to which the qualitative findings are perceived as accurately conveying the study participants’ experiences” (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016, pg. 6). Throughout the process of analysing the data, strategies such as member checking and peer debriefing were engaged as the findings were inferred in regard to **RQ#5**. This was done by going back to the participants of the interview to check and see if the broader findings as inferred from all respondents generally fit. The posing of **RQ#1** also offered a vehicle for determining credibility of the results as it offered a point of triangulation for **RQ#5**, as data

showing the IBDP as a *good education* should have coherence across its theoretical design (**RQ#1**), and how it is practically realised (**RQ#5**). Further along these lines the quality of inferences made to produce findings for **RQ#5** are also seen through *construct validation* as across all the research questions there is “a continuous process of negotiation of meaning” that is created during the conduct of a mixed methods study (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016, p. 12). Across all research questions and across all three of the research methods used, there was a common exploration of “the meaning of measures...and how these measures contribute to the quality and stability of the generated inferences” (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016, p. 12). As a driving thread throughout the entire thesis, the overarching focus of a *good education* was drawn out through each of the three stages of research and each of the three methods employed. Further, in each stage, common lenses and different lenses were used to seek data to evaluate the IBDP as a *good education*. The coherence of focus across a broad research design gives strong construct validity to the methods.

In terms of assessing the quality of the research design and methodological procedures in order to “make the study more powerful and more representative of the problem under investigation” (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016, p. 3) it is necessary to explicitly discuss why data from one key stakeholder group was not included – that of students. The desire to investigate a good education is grounded in improving educational experiences for students. It therefore might be assumed that student voice is necessary in the research design; however, as outlined below, it was deemed not necessary to include student voice, and in fact, better not to.

The inclusion of data from students as collected from the questionnaire as well as through the interviews was seriously considered, as was collecting data from parents too. However, in the end, the decision was made not to include students as it was felt that they were too intimately involved in the IBDP to provide data that would be useful for evaluating the realization of Biesta’s criteria. For example, in regards to the realization of *qualification* and *socialization*, a key element was preparing students for university. Given students would still be in the middle of the IBDP experience they would not be in a sound position to determine how well the IBDP prepared them for university. In regards to the defining element of subjectification it was determined that it would also be a challenge for students to be able to assess the degree to which the IBDP affected their personal transformation as a result of engaging in the IBDP. The IBDP is a rigorous and demanding educational experience and it takes a great deal of time for students to understand the program and its demands. Students immersed in the IBDP

would be challenged to understand and attribute the ways in which the nature and systems of the IBDP have brought about internal changes as seen through the criteria of Biesta's model for *socialization* and *subjectification*. Teachers and administrators were instead drawn upon as they have a broader perspective and are charged with looking for such longer term growth in students, and have also had feedback from graduates over time in regards to how well the IBDP prepared students with key qualifications and dispositions. Further, in regards to judging the degree to which students realize the criterion of subjectification, teachers and administrators seeing growth in students over two years in the IBDP are in a good position to see this. Again, students going through this growth may well be too intimately involved to perceive this in real time.

5. Ethical Considerations of the Design

In designing and implementing the research methods for this thesis, steps were taken to ensure it met relevant guiding ethical parameters, drawn from the Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research, as published by British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2018). At the broadest level, the thesis is intended to generate findings that will help improve educational policy and practise, and as "social science is fundamental to a democratic society," the goal of the thesis aims to improve democratic society (BERA, 2018, p. 4). In its goal of attempting to find ways to realise key goals of neoliberal educational reform and minimise its adverse effects, the thesis "aims to maximise benefit and minimise harm." All social science should aim to maximise benefit and minimise harm (p. 4).

In terms of designing the questionnaire and the interview, questions were written to ensure that no individual respondent, nor his/her setting would be discernible. All data that came in that could have identified any respondent, school setting, or student was anonymised. For the interviews, it was obviously the case that their identities were known by the researcher, but any and all information that could identify them, their school, their colleagues, or their students was also anonymised in both the production of transcripts that are included in the appendices of the thesis, and in the writeup itself. Participants were informed directly that their data would be anonymised, and in what ways data would be shared. In regard to this, the thesis fully meets the expectation that "all social science should respect the privacy, autonomy, diversity, values and dignity of individuals, groups and communities" (BERA, 2018, p. 4).

The questionnaire began with an introductory page and the interviews began with an overview that outlined (1) “the purpose of the study, (2) what is involved in a study, (3) why their participation is necessary, (4) what they will be asked to do, (5) what will happen to the information they provide, (6) how that information will be used, (7) how and to whom it will be reported, and (8) the sharing and any possible secondary uses of the research data page” (BERA, 2018, p. 9). Informed consent was acknowledged in the questionnaire and obtained through direct questioning in the interviews. Throughout the entire process of collecting and publishing this thesis, “data] were] kept securely, and that the form of any publication (including those published online) does not directly or indirectly lead to a breach of agreed confidentiality and anonymity” (BERA, 2018, p. 25).

The research design, in blending data analysis from secondary documents, a questionnaire, and interviews, attempts to “employ the most appropriate methods for the research purpose” in gathering data from broad sources to determine its findings (BERA, 2018, p. 4). The analysis of data aims to “be conducted with integrity throughout,” as the various methods of data collection affords the data to be triangulated. The design of the questionnaire was purposeful to “both put participants at their ease and avoid making excessive demands on them” so as to not unduly impact the lives and workloads of participants (BERA, 2018, pp. 19-20). This was done through the formatting of the questionnaire, and through limiting the overall length of it, so that participants would spend an estimated 12-15 minutes in its completion. The choice and number of the interview questions was also purposeful to minimise the impact on participants’ lives and workloads, and the interview began with a scripted introduction to help ensure participants were fully informed.

In terms of selecting participants for the questionnaire and interviews, there was consideration to include students currently enrolled in the IBDP, along with their parents. In setting the research design, there needs to be a balance of “research aspirations ... institutional expectations and individual rights,” and it was felt that including these two stakeholder groups may put undue stress on them while going through the IBDP, both in terms of time demands, as well as in regard to feeling pressure to not respond in any way that may adversely affect their achievement. Anecdotally, many students and parents have expressed concern in sharing any sort of negative feedback, as it may be held against them in some way. While the two stakeholders could have provided valuable additional data, the risk-benefit analysis must defer to ensuring participants are well protected (BERA, 2018).

In terms of the secondary document analysis, the research design included considerations of “the sensitivity of the data, who created it, [and] the intended audience of its creators” (BERA, 2018, p. 11). The IBDP key documents that have been used are publicly available online, and all copyright restrictions have been respected.

Finally, in terms of the collection, analysis, and/or publication of any and all data and/or findings for this thesis, no incentives of any kind were given, nor received (BERA, 2018).

6. Data Reporting & Analysis

a. Overview

The purpose of this section is to present the ways in which the data collected from the secondary document analysis, the questionnaire, and the interviews are reported and analysed as the first part of Chapter 4 of the thesis. The reporting and analysis of the data collected serves to evaluate the overarching research question of the thesis – to what degree to international schools grounded in the IBDP offer a *good education* as seen through Biesta’s criteria of *qualification*, *socialization*, and *subjectification*. The data collected is sequentially presented and analysed according to the five research questions posed to evaluate the thesis’s overarching hypothesis, which forms the basis of the overall discussion that will constitute the second part of the fourth chapter.

Reporting and analysis begins with data pertaining to the degree to which the IBDP in its theoretical design represents a *good education* (**RQ#1**). This reporting and analysis is based on data drawn from the secondary document analysis. Thereafter, data relevant to **RQ#s 2, 3, and 4** is reported and analysed, as gathered primarily from the questionnaire and supported, as and if necessary, from the part one of the interviews. Finally, data relevant to **RQ#5** is reported and analysed, as drawn from the interviews in order to evaluate the degree to which the IBDP as delivered in market-based international schools realises a *good education* according to Biesta’s criteria of *subjectification*. The following subsections outline how the data will be reported and analysed for each of the five research questions.

b. RQ#1 – The IBDP as a Good Education in Design

RQ#1 investigates the degree to which the IBDP in its theoretical design represents a *good education* according to Biesta’s model. This question is essential to the overarching premise

of the thesis; if the IBDP doesn't align with a *good education* in its theoretical design, then there is no avenue forward to pursue the overarching premise of the thesis. Given this significance of *RQ#1*, the reporting of findings begins here.

The findings for *RQ#1* are based upon data collected through a secondary document analysis, a research method designed to examine and interpret key pieces of information in order to generate points of qualitative data for to gain understanding and develop knowledge (Bowen, 2009; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Rapley, 2007; Labuschagne, 2003). Within this qualitative research method, “documents that may be used for systematic evaluation as part of a study take a variety of forms” (Bowen, 2009, p. 28). For purposes of this thesis, foundational programmatic documents published by the IBDP will be used to first give an overview of the IBDP in order to provide broader context to the nature and founding purposes of the IBDP. Thereafter, the presentation and analysis of data relevant to the degree to which the IBDP in its theoretical design meets the criteria of Biesta's first and second criteria of a *good education* – *qualification* and *socialization* – will be conducted based upon the foundational documents.

The analysis and presentation of findings is a multi-step process involving (1) an initial skimming or superficial examination, (2) a thorough examination, and (3) an interpretation of the documents under investigation. The process is not linear but is instead “an iterative process that combines elements of content analysis and thematic analysis” (Bowen, 2009, p. 32). Section 4.B.2 and 4.B.3 will present the key elements found in the IBDP core publications that meet the first two criteria of a *good education* – *qualification* and *socialization*. These two criteria represent a minimum requirement of a *good education*, and as outlined in the literature review, are typically present in neoliberal systems of education. Based upon the data found and presented, an overall judgement will be made in regard to the degree to which the IBDP in its design meets these two criteria.

Section 4.B.4 presents and analyses the key elements found in the IBDP core publications that meet the final criterion of a *good education* – *subjectification*. As this is the defining element of a *good education* according to Biesta, the analysis for this is more substantial. To analyse the data, the mandatory elements of the IBDP authorisation process were drawn out in order to frame the secondary document analysis. Specifically, the IBDP expects schools to frame teaching and learning around: (1) the IBDP's Guiding Statements, (2) the Learner Profile, (3) expected pedagogical techniques, (4) Approaches to Learning, (5) the IBDP Core, and (6)

expected assessment practises. Data found from the key documents that cohere with *subjectification* will be presented as categorised by the lenses through which schools are evaluated by the IBDP. For each of the required elements of authorisation for the IBDP an assessment will be made in regard to the degree to which it meets Biesta's criteria of *subjectification*. Thereafter, an overall summative assessment will be made based upon the degree to which the IBDP meets the criterion of *subjectification* as analysed across all six required elements of the IBDP.

Finally, based upon the overall secondary document analysis, a summative conclusion based upon the data obtained from the secondary document analysis will be given in regard to the degree to which the IBDP represents a *good education* in theoretical construct according to all criteria of a *good education* – *qualification, socialization, and subjectification*.

c. RQ#2 – The IBDP & Accountability

RQ#2 investigated the degree to which the IBDP as offered in international schools provides accountability for the quality of education. This research question was posed in order to determine how effectively the IBDP meets the driving goal of neoliberal educational reform of ensuring accountability of schooling. The significance of this **RQ** was grounded in the thesis's intention of building on the neoliberal goal of ensuring accountability within a market-based system.

The findings for **RQ#2** are primarily based upon data obtained from the questionnaire. Data obtained from the first part of the interview are used in corroborative support. Questions 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, and 16 of the survey directly solicited data to analyse and evaluate the degree to which the IBDP provides accountability for the quality of its education. The questions solicited data in regard to:

- The types of sources of evidence that are made available (Q#8)
- The degree to which various sources of evidence are valued by different stakeholder groups (Q#s 9-11)
- the degree to which sources of evidence are readily available to stakeholder groups in order to determine the quality of the IBDP (Q#12)
- the degree to which sources of evidence are accessed and used to determine the quality of the IBDP across stakeholder groups (Q#14)

- the degree to which there is a variety of appropriate sources of evidence to determine the quality of the IBDP across stakeholder groups (Q#15)

Data collected by the questionnaire in regard to **RQ#2** is reported through tables. The analysis involves judgements made by and across questions. Data for Question 8 and 9 established the degree to which sources of evidence are grounded in exam-based metrics, as well as the relative valuing of different sources across stakeholder groups. Questions 12, 14 and 15 established the degree to which sources of evidence are of quality and are actually used. Question 16 is a broad question that generated summative data to validate the finds from the previous questions, as it asked teachers within the IBDP the degree to which they felt they are held accountable for their quality of teaching within the IBDP. Finally, based upon an overall analysis of data obtained from the relevant questions, a summative conclusion is given for **RQ#2** which investigates the degree to which the IBDP as offered in international schools provides accountability for the quality of education.

d. RQ#3 – Negative Implications of Accountability in the IBDP
RQ#3 investigates the degree to which the IBDP as offered in international schools is adversely impacted by its measures of accountability. It is necessary to evaluate **RQ#3**, as it is possible that the IBDP realises a *good education*, according to the criteria of Biesta’s model, while simultaneously generating the negative implications seen in the neoliberal paradigm outlined in the literature review above.

The literature review brought forth three main negative implications of neoliberal reform resultant from its measures of accountability: (1) an excessive focus on exam results, (2) an excessive focus on competition, and (3) a negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning, as seen through decreasing innovation, a narrowing of curricular focus, and by limiting teachers’ abilities to know and differentiate to their students’ individual learning needs because of pressures to produce exam results. Findings for **RQ#3** are based primarily upon data from the questionnaire. They are reported and analysed according to each of three categories of negative implications noted.

Questions 9 through 11 asked respondents to rank the top four criteria that parents, teachers, and administrators use to determine the quality of the IBDP at the school. These questions served the purpose of first establishing the degree to which exam results are a prime focus

according to stakeholders. Questions 17, 18, and 19 of the survey thereafter solicited corroborating data in regard to the degree to which there is an *excessive* focus on exam results by gauging the degree to which respondents agreed with the following statements across stakeholder groups:

- *IBDP final exam grades are used as the main indicator of the quality of your school;*
- *IBDP exam results are used as the main indicator of the quality of a student's learning;*
- *IBDP exam results are used as the main indicator of the quality of a teacher's teaching.*

Once data was presented and analysed in regard to the degree to which there was a clear reliance on exam-based measures to ensure accountability, data from the questionnaire was presented to determine the degree to which negative implication of neoliberal reform is present. Data from question 23 allowed for the presentation of findings on excessive competition, and questions 20 through 22 allow for the presentation of findings in regard to the negative impact on teaching and learning. Finally, data from questions 24 through 26 of the survey are presented in order to analyse the degree to which alternative measures of quality assurance within the IBDP are valued, as drawn specifically from the Learner Profile, a core element of the IBDP that speaks to Biesta's tenet of *subjectification*.

An overall summary of the negative impact of the IBDP's measures of accountability will be presented based upon the degree to which there is an excessive focus on the exam, the degree to which non-exam-based measures of quality are valued, as well as the degree to which there is a negative impact on the teaching and learning process. Importantly, the results from the analysis and findings from the questionnaire will be used to shape the first part of the interview in order to generate further qualitative data to fuel the discussion section of the fourth chapter, to evaluate the degree to which the IBDP as a *good education* is negatively impacted by its measures of accountability.

e. RQ#4 – IBDP & Preparation for University

RQ#4 investigates the degree to which the IBDP offered in international schools prepares students for university. This research question is posed in order to determine the degree to which the IBDP meets the basic expectations of a *good education* in terms of providing key qualifications – academic and social. The findings for **RQ#4** will be based upon data from the questionnaire. Questions 27 and 28 ask respondents to directly indicate the degree to which the IBDP prepares students for university academically and socially, respectively. Percentages

of agreement will be reported directly. Should there be any conflicting or ambiguous data, the first part of the interview will be used to collect follow-up qualitative data.

f. RQ#5 – The IBDP Realizing a Good Education through subjectification
RQ#5 investigated the degree to which the IBDP offered in international schools realises a *good education* as evaluated by Biesta’s concept of *subjectification*. The questions for the interview were designed to generate qualitative data in regard to the composite criteria that make up Biesta’s concept of *subjectification*. The seven interview questions of the interview related directly to the following six elements of *subjectification* as identified and analysed in the literature review:

- the promotion of active, independent learners who have agency (*Interview Question #1*)
- the provision of learning experiences that disrupt and challenge students’ existing ways of being, thinking, and doing (*Interview Question #2*)
- the promotion of critically aware and reflective learners (*Interview Question #3*)
- the promotion of learners who actively challenge self and community (*Interview Questions #s 4 & 5*)
- the provision of learning experiences that expect, empower, and engage students in higher order thinking skills (*Interview Question #6*)
- the provision of learning experiences that expect, empower, and engage students in knowledge creation as a result of their evaluation, analysis, and synthesis (*Interview Question #7*)

Section 4.F proceeds sequentially in reporting and analysing the data from the interview questions according to each of the seven criteria noted above.

The process of analysis is conceptual content analysis and involves a “focused re-reading and review of the data...[where] the reviewer takes a closer look at the selected data and performs coding and category construction, based on the data’s characteristics, to uncover themes pertinent to a phenomenon” (Bowen, 2009, p. 32). The qualitative data points across the nine interviews are drawn out thematically by looking for and reporting patterns within the data as related to each of the six criteria of *subjectification* (Bowen, 2009; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The six criteria of *subjectification* serve as the codes and “the themes they generate serve to integrate data gathered” (Bowen, 2009, p. 32). Composite notes were then compiled

across all nine interviews as grouped by the six criteria (Bowen, 2009). Thereafter, findings are presented in Section 4.F through different sub-sections that correspond with each of the six criteria of *subjectification*.

Within a given sub-section, data is analysed and summarised using a *weaving approach* whereby findings will be *integrated through narrative* in order to establish the overall degree to which the a given criterion of *subjectification* is seen in the IBDP in practise (Fetters, et al., 2013). As drawn from the data collated by each of the criteria of *subjectification*, the degree to which there were common elements across the nine interviewees was used to determine the overall effect. The frequency with which a given element was mentioned across interviewees was woven into the analysis, as well as the specificity of the examples given to justify and explain the way in which the criteria of *subjectification* were realised, according to interviewee responses. Where there is discordance across respondents' responses, analysis is engaged in based upon noting the degree to which data is inconsistent, incongruous, contradictory, and/or conflicting (Fetters, et al., 2013; Wheeldon, 2010). For each of the six criteria, an overall evaluation is made in regard to the degree to which that element of *subjectification* is realised in the IBDP. Finally, based upon the analysis of interview data by defining criteria of *subjectification*, a summative evaluation is made in regard to the degree to which the IBDP realises *subjectification*.

7. Conclusion

This third chapter outlines the research methodology for the thesis used to evaluate the degree to which the IBDP offered in international schools provides a *good education*. The thesis is grounded in a constructivist paradigm and employs mixed methods research for its design, drawing upon a secondary document analysis, a questionnaire, and interviews. The data gathered from these three design sources is presented and analysed sequentially, according to the five research questions that are established to evaluate the overarching hypothesis of the thesis. The results from the data analysis are presented in the first part of the fourth chapter, followed by an overall evaluative discussion of the research findings. The table below presents a summary of the research design:

Table 5: Summary of Research Design

RQ	Purpose of Analysis	Elements Analysed	Criteria Used to Analyse Elements	Method of Analysis
#1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine degree to which IBDP meets criteria of a <i>good education</i> in its theoretical design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Qualification & socialization</i> as criteria of a <i>good education</i> 	IBDP purposefully designed with elements intended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> prepare students for academic success in university prepare students for social success in university increase ease of access to university 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary document analysis Examine framing IBDP documents that outline requirements for authorisation Collect data points from all documents to provide supporting evidence in regard to criteria defining the elements of <i>qualification</i> and <i>socialization</i> Present summary findings holistically based upon all data collected
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Subjectification</i> as a criterion of a <i>good education</i> 	IBDP purposefully designed with elements intended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> produce independent learners engage students in disruptive learning experiences create critically aware and reflective learners challenge students' conceptions of self and community have students acquire higher order thinking skills, have students create new knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary document analysis Examine framing IBDP documents that outline requirements for authorisation Collect data points from all documents to provide supporting evidence in regard to criteria defining the elements of <i>subjectification</i> Present summary findings according to the following five elements that frame the authorisation process: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Guiding statements Learner Profile Expected Pedagogy IBDP Core Expected Assessment Framework Present an overall summary finding
#2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine degree to which IBDP provides accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sources of evidence used to hold schools accountable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sources of evidence in the accountability process are varied, appropriate, accessible and used by key stakeholders Perceptions of stakeholders in regard to broad view of degree to which there is accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative data analysis based upon questionnaire Descriptive statistical analysis based upon percentages Corroborating secondary content/conceptual analysis based upon qualitative data from Part 1 of the interviews
#3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine degree to which IBDP generates negative implications as seen in neoliberal reform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excessive focus on exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main sources of evidence used by stakeholders to determine quality Valuation by stakeholders of non-exam-based measures of quality 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excessive focus on competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of competition between students in a given class Degree of competition between students within IBDP 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to engage in innovative and experimental pedagogical strategies Ability for teachers to know and connect with students individually Ability for teachers to adapt teaching to individual students' learning needs 	
#4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine degree to which IBDP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation for university 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IBDP prepares students for university academically 	

	prepares students for university		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IBDP prepares students for university socially 	
#5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine degree to which IBDP realises criteria of a <i>good education</i> in practise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Subjectification</i> as a criterion of a <i>good education</i> 	<p>IBDP realises teaching and learning that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> produces independent learners engages students in disruptive learning experiences creates critically aware and reflective learners challenges students' conceptions of self and community has students acquire higher order thinking skills, has students create new knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews as the research methodology to generate qualitative data Content / conceptual analysis of qualitative interview data

Chapter 4: Findings

A. Introduction

The fourth chapter begins by presenting the findings for each of the five research questions. The findings are presented sequentially with a section for each of the five questions. Findings for **RQ#1** are based upon the secondary document analysis and the degree to which the IBDP realises a *good education* will be analysed against each of the three of Biesta's criteria. Findings for **RQ#s 2, 3, and 4** will each be presented in turn through a summary statistical analysis to show the degree to which the minimum expectations of neoliberal reform, along with the minimal requirements of a *good education*, are met through the IBDP. Finally, the qualitative findings from the interview will be presented in regard to **RQ#5** to establish the degree to which the defining criteria of a *good education* – *subjectification* – is realised in international schools offering the IBDP. Thereafter, the second half of the chapter presents a discussion section in which thematic findings are shared based upon an overall analysis of the research findings.

B. Research Findings for RQ#1

1. Overview

RQ#1 establishes the degree to which the IBDP coheres with a *good education* in theoretical design, based upon the three criteria of Biesta's model: *qualification*, *socialization*, and *subjectification*. The findings presented below are based upon a secondary document analysis of key IBDP publications and are presented sequentially, based upon each of the three defining criteria. In regard to the criteria of *qualification* and *socialization*, the analysis is determined holistically based upon a thematic analysis of the IBDP key documents. In regard to the criterion of *subjectification*, the analysis is based upon the degree to which the defining elements of *subjectification* are found in the five required elements for IBDP authorisation. It is anticipated that the IBDP represents a *good education* in conceptual design according to Biesta's criteria of *qualification*, *socialization*, and *subjectification*.

The IB was founded in 1968 by teachers working at the International School of Geneva and designed as an international curriculum for expat students in their final two years of high school in need of a graduation qualification that would allow them to enter university in their home countries (IB, 2015). The IBDP is explicit in serving the goal of providing summary learning results of student achievement to enable “the certification and selection of students as they

proceed to tertiary education” (IB, 2004, p. 3). The IBDP is “designed to equip students with the basic academic skills needed for university study, further education and their chosen profession” (IB, 2015, p. 5). It is also designed with the expectation that “a pre-university education equips students with the depth of discipline-specific knowledge and skills that they will need to follow their chosen university course and for use later in their professional lives” (IB, 2015, p. 5).

In terms of the International Baccalaureate Programme, it is important to set the IBDP within the context of the larger IB Programmes. The IBDP was the first program offered with the Primary Years Programme (PYP) and the Middle Years Programme (MYP) being brought to life many years later. The PYP is a curricular framework for Elementary School and the MYP is a curricular framework for grades six through ten. Finally, the Career-related Programme (CP) was brought to life as an alternative to the IBDP which was seen as a rigorous college preparatory track. The IBDP has been around the longest and had the clearest purpose – to provide direct access to university for students overseas. The PYP and MYP had new elements that then fed into and influenced the IBDP, bringing to life further demands and expectations, such as the Learner Profile, something relevant to this thesis given the tensions that emerge in the design of the IBDP as compared to how it is brought to life in reality (www.ibo.org).

2. Findings for Criterion of *Qualification*

In its design, the IBDP explicitly promotes that it is “accepted by the best universities around the world...[and] that the majority of DP graduates enter higher education” (IB, 2015, p. 4). Each year, IBDP graduates apply to more than 3,300 universities globally, in close to 90 different countries, with the most popular of these institutions ranking in the top universities in the world (www.ibo.org). Further helping students access university, students graduating with the IBDP automatically meet TOEFL requirements (www.ibo.org). The IBDP also actively supports students accessing universities by promoting and educating universities and governments through their regional offices (IB, 2015). The IB regional offices proactively reach out to numerous institutions to ensure the broad recognition of the IBDP across an international scale, working with governments to help them understand how the “the DP is a complement to their educational system and could help to improve national schools” (IB, 2015, p. 4). At the core of its foundational purpose is the expressed desire to prepare students for university, cohering directly with Biesta’s criterion of *qualification*.

3. Findings for Criterion of *Socialization*

The IBDP is designed to provide students with an international education that “enables young people to better understand and manage the complexities of our world” (IB, 2015, p. 4). It explicitly recognises that students “come to school with combinations of unique and shared patterns of values, knowledge and experience of the world and their place in it” and therefore the programme is designed to “provide students with...an education that encourages an understanding and appreciation of other cultures, languages and points of view” (IB, 2015, p. 4). To facilitate this, the IBDP outlines what it calls the Learner Profile – a set of dispositions that establishes a “common sense of purpose and identity” for students to acquire in order to “understand themselves, what it means to be human, and to make sense of their place in an increasingly interdependent, globalised and digitised world” (IB, 2015, p. 6). The Learner Profile is designed to help students realise that “[c]ommunities are bound together by a common sense of purpose and identity,” and will help them socially integrate into university (IB, 2015, p. 9).

The Learner Profile “is at the core...of the Programme,” and defines in theoretical construct the ideal dispositional characteristics of a successful IBDP education (IB, 2015, p. 5). In expecting students to acquire affective dispositions in addition to the expectations of cognitive and academic development, the IBDP places an explicit demand for “developing competent and active citizens” (IB, 2015, p. 5). The development of a student’s sense of self and their place in their world comes as a result of the IBDP expecting students to “think about their own values and actions, to understanding their place in the world, and to shape their identity” (IB, 2013a, p. 7).

The Learner Profile outlines the expectation that students who successfully graduate from the IBDP will possess “an explicit variety of skills that will equip them to continue to be actively engaged in learning after they leave school” (IB, 2013b, p. 3). The skills the IBDP speak to in design “encompass cognitive, metacognitive and affective skills ... including skills of behaviour and emotional management underpinning attitudinal factors such as resilience, perseverance and self-motivation” (IB, xxxx, p. 3). The framing of these skills within the Learner Profile is based upon extensive research in which the IBDP drew upon universities’ stated needs, major international corporations’ needs, international standards like ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education), and the OECD and their numerous educational reports (IB, xxxx, p. 3). Through the Learner Profile, the IBDP in its theoretical

design intends to prepare students for successful social integration into university and therefore meets Biesta's second criterion of a *good education*, *socialization*.

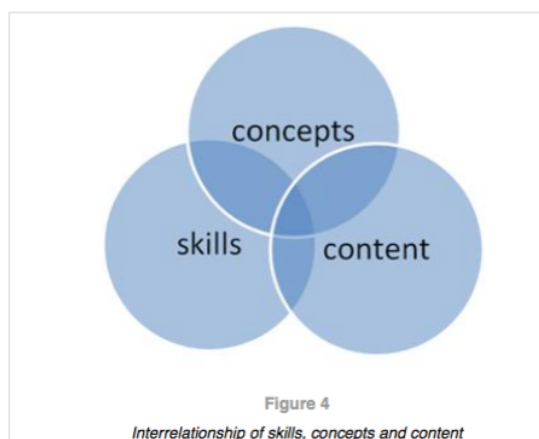
4. Findings for Criterion of *Subjectification*

a. Overview

The secondary document analysis continues analysing and presenting findings for *RQ#1* in regard to the degree to which the IBDP meets the distinguishing concept of a *good education* – *subjectification* – in its design by presenting findings based upon required elements of the IBDP as evaluated in its authorisation process, beginning with the expectations that need to be met as found in its Guiding Statements, followed by expectations for the Learner Profile, required pedagogical framework, the IBDP Core, and finally, for assessment practises.

b. Findings for Criterion of Subjectification from Guiding Statements

The IBDP's mission is *unapologetically idealistic* in its aim “to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect” (IB, 2004, p. v). It recognises that successful teaching and learning “values the world as the broadest context for learning” (IB, xxxx, p. 1). Unlike neoliberal educational reform, the IBDP is grounded in foundational philosophical purpose which is a requirement for the realisation of *subjectification*. To realise its purpose, the IBDP expects schools to engage students in a concept-based curriculum (IB, xxxx, p. 18). Concepts are “broad, powerful, organizing ideas” that facilitate students' abilities “to build the capacity to engage with complex ideas” (IB, xxxx, p. 18).



The IBDP's guiding statements recognise that a meaningful education is one that is designed and expects students to “go beyond the acquisition of knowledge and skills to include the education of the *whole person*” in order to “live a fulfilled and purposeful life” (IB, 2015, pp. 5-6). Beyond prescribing that which can be learned concretely and tested objectively, the IBDP is designed with the open-ended, subjective goal that each student achieves their fullest potential in order “to understand, to modify and to enjoy his or her environment, both inner and outer, in its physical, social, moral, aesthetic and spiritual aspects” (IB, 2015, pp. 5-6).

The goal of developing students who are able to understand and also modify their worlds at the moral, aesthetic, and spiritual level speaks directly to the criterion of *subjectification*.

The IBDP expects that students have “critical engagement with challenging ideas” in a manner that remains open to the past while looking to foster innovation (IB, 2015, p. 7). This defining characteristic of the DP asks and expects students to become more than that which is offered to them through the learning process (IB, 2015, p. 5). In its framing documents, successful IBDP graduates are those who are able to be independent and autonomous as a result of their learning, and this coheres with the framing of *subjectification* which asks students to realise the “meaningful distinction between education oriented toward the insertion into existing orders and education oriented toward freedom” (Biesta, 2016, p. 78). In regard to Biesta’s goal of *subjectification*, the IBDP’s Guiding Statements purposefully outline several expectations that cohere with the criteria of *subjectification*.

c. Findings for Criterion of Subjectification from The Learner Profile

The Learner Profile outlines key dispositions students are intended to acquire and display as a result of their engagement in the programme. There are numerous elements within the Learner Profile that directly link to Biesta’s concept of *subjectification*. For example, students are expected to be able to “find out how knowledge is constructed” with the explicit recognition that there should not be “acceptance of knowledge claims without sufficient inquiry and evidence” (IB, 2013a, p. 6). Further, students expected to “examine thinking in order to understand what constitutes good thinking and also recognise potential flaws in thought processes” (IB, 2013a, p. 6). The IBDP coheres *subjectification* in that students are to be critically aware and reflective. When students are expected to find flaws in those thought processes taught to them, they explicitly learn that they are expected to become more than what is presented to them. Students are also expected to “learn to balance scepticism with belief” and are to engage in learning experiences that will teach them to “recognise that in many situations there is a need to make decisions without possessing absolute certainty” (IB, 2013a, p. 6).

The Learner Profile also expects students to “risk questioning what they hold to be true,” and in doing so, learn to “risk being wrong” in light of the fact that absolute certainty is not possible (IB, 2013a, p. 7). This notion of accepting one’s fallibility, along with having the expectation that students will learn to be confident in operating under such expectations of fallibility,

coheres with the aim of *subjectification* which speaks to the need to embrace a *weak-curriculum* – one which has at its heart an immeasurable pedagogy of disruption. Equipping students to take intellectual risks is of paramount importance if they are to successfully accept and operate in a world that places human subjectivity as an ideal. At the heart of the Learner Profile are designed intentions of an education that realises Biesta’s criterion of *subjectification*.

d. Findings for Criterion of Subjectification from Pedagogy

The IBDP expects schools to frame learning within a constructivist philosophy, in which “students are encouraged to make ideas their own and to understand the application of these ideas within their own curriculum and their own lives” (IB, xxxx, p. 1). The IBDP in its design also expects teaching and learning to link “link [students] to *their* local and global contexts” (IB, xxxx, p. 1). The expectation of putting students at the centre of the learning process whereby they develop their own understandings means that students are expected to be part of the process of setting learning goals as a result of their own curiosity and interests. Students are expected to “frame their own inquiries, pursue personal aspirations, set challenging goals” (IB, 2015, p. 8). This philosophical framework sets the expectation for learners to be subjects in the learning process, rather than objects, aligning with *subjectification*.

The IBDP sees “critical reflection as the process by which curiosity and experience can lead to deeper understanding” (IB, 2015, pg. 21). As a result of their experience within the IBDP students “must become critically aware of the way they use evidence, methods and conclusions” and reflection on learning experiences is the key vehicle for determining and evaluating “potential bias and inaccuracy in their own work and in the work of others” (IB, 2015, p. 21). The valuation and expectation of reflective engagement as the core of learning also speaks directly to *subjectification*. If students are to become independent and affect change on the communities in which they learn and exist, they must be able to detect that which needs changing – not only within their communities, but also within themselves.

The pedagogical expectations of the IBDP are “[d]riven by inquiry, action and reflection” and does so in order to help students become independent learners, able to “effectively manage and evaluate their own learning” (IB, 2015, p. 22). To achieve this the IBDP prescribes key “competencies for research, critical and creative thinking, collaboration, communication, managing information and self-assessment” and mandates that schools offering the IBDP

explicitly teach to these skills, expecting to see them embedded within the unit planning process (IB, 2015, p. 22). The IBDP values these transdisciplinary, meta-skills as they allow students to “analyse one’s own thinking and efforts in terms of the products and performances that grow from them” (IB, 2015, p. 21). The inquiry-based pedagogical approach that frames teaching and learning in the IBDP is meant to purposefully engage students in *problem-based learning* whereby “students analyse and propose solutions to a real-world problem that is usually presented to them in an unstructured and often open-ended manner” (IB, 2015, p. 21). These designed expectations of the IBDP as expressed in its theoretical design again cohere with the criterion of *subjectification*.

e. Findings for Criterion of Subjectification from the IBDP Core

The IBDP Core outlines three required programmatic elements beyond the required six academic subjects students take in the IBDP. The Core is described as *the heart of the IBDP* and consists of three components – the Extended Essay (EE), Creativity Action and Service (CAS), and Theory of Knowledge (ToK), and students engage in the Core to “educate the whole person ... and develop self-awareness and a sense of identity” (IB, 2013a, p. 4). Its very purpose coheres with *subjectification*.

The EE is “intended to promote high-level research and writing skills, intellectual discovery and creativity” (IB, 2013b, p. 2) and its design expects students to “create knowledge, ... pursue independent research ... [and] experience the excitement of intellectual discovery” (IB, 2013b, p. 6). The EE is designed to “necessarily involve intellectual risk-taking and extensive reflection” (IB, 2013b, p. 3) and in expecting this level of independence and academic creativity, the design of the IBDP intends that *subjectification* occur. This is also seen in ToK, which is framed around the goals of getting students to recognise the inherent bias to all knowledge claims, and thereafter accept and embrace the idea that knowledge is not absolutely certain (IB, 2013a). ToK coheres directly with the concept of *subjectification* as it expects students to “focus on how knowledge is constructed and evaluated,” and can be applied across academic disciplines as a filter of establishing degrees of truth and certainty of knowledge (IB, 2013a, p. 22). The very nature of ToK speaks directly to Biesta’s (2012) conceptualization of a weak curriculum, one which asks schools to embrace the uncertainty of the teaching and learning process, and therefore grounds ToK in the concept of *subjectification*.

The final component of the IBDP Core is CAS, which “aims to develop students who are ‘reflective thinkers who understand their own strengths and limitations, identify goals and devise strategies for personal growth’” (IB, 2008, p. 3). Success for CAS learning outcomes is determined through “evidence that students are able to see themselves as individuals with various skills and abilities, some more developed than others, and understand that they can make choices about how they wish to move forward” (IB, 2008, p. 5). CAS was designed to “enable students to enhance their personal and interpersonal development through experiential learning ... [and] provides a personal journey of self-discovery” (IB, 2008, p. 3). This process of self-discovery is, again, at the heart of the idea of *subjectification*, and the design is explicit in asking IBDP schools to construct educational experiences through CAS that “are profound and life-changing” (IB, 2008, p. 3). Through CAS participation, students are to engage in self-directed action that will involve “real, purposeful activities with significant outcomes” that will involve “personal challenge that extend the student” (IB, 2008, p. 3). Across the entire Core – the EE, ToK, and CAS – the IBDP has intentionally designed teaching and learning experiences and expectations that are geared directly at the realisation of *subjectification*.

f. Findings for Criterion of Subjectification from Assessment

The IBDP views intelligence in a more complex framework than the traditional unidimensional view and sets its assessment tasks to allow students to demonstrate their emergent intelligence as well as demonstrate newly emerging knowledge in different ways (IB, 2004, p. 5). Assessment practises are grounded in the belief that students come to learn through their individual construction of knowledge and skills, and that this learning “often takes place in an irregular fashion, not following a logical sequence from simple to complex” (IB, 2004, pg. 6). IBDP assessment tasks must allow for and expect student responses that are “highly varied, with many equally valid and correct forms of response” (IB, 2004, p. 12). The IBDP by design “does not give precise guidance to markers on exactly what each mark should be awarded for” because the assessment tasks are expecting students to demonstrate their understanding in unanticipated and novel ways (IB, 2004, p. 6).

The IBDP explicitly recognises that classical psychometric testing used to measure student achievement (i.e., standardised testing in neoliberal paradigms) leads to “a very restrictive kind of assessment task” that doesn’t allow for multidimensional human development (IB, 2004, p. 5). Instead, the IBDP in its design expects student evaluation to employ open-ended problem solving, essays, project work, and examinations that are *performance assessments* “that directly reflect the range of knowledge and skills they have learned in the classroom” (IB,

2004, p. 6). The framing documents of the IBDP expect that assessment instruments “must pay appropriate attention to higher-order cognitive skills (synthesis, reflection, evaluation, critical thinking) as well as the more fundamental cognitive skills (knowledge, understanding, and application)” (IB, 2004, p. 12). The IBDP is prescriptive in its assessment expectations to ensure that “the aspirations expressed in the mission statement is supported by the assessment system” (IB, 2004, p. 12). Given the explicit recognition of the individual contextualization that students bring to the learning process, the IBDP structures its assessment tasks to reflect the active role that a student must take as subjects of their learning process, meaning that in this way it also coheres with the criterion of *subjectification*.

The findings for the degree to which the IBDP meets the distinguishing concept of a *good education – subjectification* – as seen against its guiding statements, the Learner Profile, assessment expectations, pedagogical expectations, the IBDP Core, and assessment expectations all show that the theoretical design of the IBDP meets the criteria of *subjectification*.

5. Summary of Research Findings for RQ#1

The secondary document analysis of key IBDP publications shows that the IBDP coheres with a *good education* in its theoretical design, based upon the three criteria of Biesta’s model: *qualification*, *socialization*, and *subjectification*. The very founding of the IBDP was grounded in facilitating students’ entrance into university serving the criterion of qualification. Through the IB Learner Profile, the IBDP’s design is also firmly grounded in meeting Biesta’s criteria of socialization. Finally, through the IBDP’s the Guiding Statements, the Learner Profile expectations, the expected pedagogical and assessment practices, as well as the elements of the IBDP Core, the IBDP is designed well to realize the criterion of subjectification.

C. Research Findings for RQ#2

1. Overview

The purpose of *RQ#2* is to establish the degree to which the IBDP provides measures of accountability for the quality of education provided. The findings presented are based upon data collected through the quantitatively based questionnaire and the qualitatively based interviews. Strong measures of accountability for the quality of education provided by the IBDP were anticipated.

2. Findings for Degree of Accountability in the IBDP

Data from question 8 of the survey show the main sources of evidence present in IBDP schools used to ensure quality. Of the 19 options of evidence respondents could choose from, the main indicators used for quality assurance as indicated by at least 80% of the respondents are:

Table 6a: Main Sources of Evidence Used to Ensure Quality of IBDP (Q#8)

Evidence	% of Respondents
• Overall IBDP exam results as compared to the world average	91.18%
• Overall IBDP exam results	88.24%
• Students' pass rates for earning the IB Diploma	82.35%
• Accuracy of predicted grades	80.88%
• University Acceptances	85.29%

The next most prevalent sources of evidence (60-79% of respondents' choices) present in IBDP schools used to ensure quality are noted here:

Table 6b: Additional Sources of Evidence Used to Ensure Quality of IBDP (Q#8)

Evidence	% of Respondents
• Students' pass rates as compared to world averages	77.94%
• Subject specific exam results as compared to the world average	76.9%
• Subject specific exam results	73.53%
• Extended Essay results	64.71%

On the other extreme, the least prevalent sources of evidence present in IBDP schools used to ensure quality are noted here:

Table 6c: Least Used Sources of Evidence Used to Ensure Quality of IBDP (Q#8)

Evidence	% of Respondents
• Parent climate survey results	30.88%
• Quality of CAS programme	27.94%
• Demonstration of Learner Profile dispositions	25.52%
• Alumni survey results	25.00%
• Student involvement in extracurricular activities and athletics	17.65%

● Percentage of students taking Arts	8.82%
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Questions 9 through 11 ask respondents to rank the top four criteria that parents, teachers, and administrators used by the stakeholder group to determine the quality of the IBDP at the school. For each stakeholder group, data from the questionnaire show that evidence grounded in exam results were most often used as the dominant source, with results noted here:

Table 7: Ranking of Top 4 Criteria Used to Ensure Quality of IBDP (Q#9-11)

	Parents	Teachers	Admin
<i>Exam-based sources of evidence to determine quality of IBDP</i>	70%	80%	72%

Question 12 asks if sources of evidence are readily available to parents, teachers, and administrators. The data from the questionnaire is noted here:

Table 8: Ready Availability of Sources of Data (Q#12)

	Parents	Teachers	Admin
<i>Percentage of respondents in agreement that sources of data are readily available to each stakeholder group</i>	70%	90%	92%

Question 14 asks if sources of evidence are accessed and used by parents, teachers, and administrators. The data from the questionnaire is noted here:

Table 9: Use of Sources of Data to Ensure Quality of IBDP (Q#14)

	Parents	Teachers	Admin
<i>Percentage of respondents in agreement that sources of data accessed and used by each stakeholder group</i>	50%	81%	76%

Question 15 asks respondents to indicate their overall impression of the degree to which a variety of appropriate sources of evidence across all stakeholders is available to make sound judgements of the quality of teaching and learning in the IBDP. Just over half of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that there are, and 83.82% at least somewhat agreed that there are appropriate sources readily available across all stakeholder groups.

Question 16 asks respondents if they feel they are appropriately held accountable as teachers for the quality of teaching and learning in their IBDP classes by parents and administration.

Data from the questionnaire showing the degree to which faculty agree each stakeholder group holds them appropriately accountable is noted here:

Table 10: Degree to Which Teachers are Held Accountable (Q#16)

	Held Appropriately Accountable by Parents	Held Appropriately Accountable by Admin
Strongly Agree	11.67%	16.42%
Agreed or Strongly Agree	53.34%	61.2%
Somewhat agree, agree, or strongly agree	81.67%	82.1%

The quantitative data gathered from questions 8-12 and 14-16 show that the IBDP offered in international schools provides a high degree of accountability for the quality of education it provides. Each stakeholder group of parents, teachers, and administrators indicates multiple common sources of evidence that can be used to determine quality of the IBDP from IBDP exam results at an overall level, to exam results compared to world averages, student pass rates, accuracy of predicted grades, as well as university acceptance rates based upon exam results. The other data relevant to **RQ#2** show that the sources of evidence are readily available to each stakeholder group, with rates of agreement at or above 90% for faculty and administration. Further evidence of the IBDP providing clear measures of accountability come from the data indicating that the sources of evidence showing the quality of teaching and learning in the IBDP are accessed and used by teachers and administration. The data show that only 50% of parents access and use the data.

The data from questions 15 and 16 are intended to provide broad corroborating evidence of the IBDP ensuring quality of teaching and learning and the data show that there are strong measures of accountability. Across all stakeholder groups, the data show that just over half of respondents strongly agree that there are a variety of appropriate sources of evidence across all stakeholders available to make sound judgements about the quality of teaching and learning in the IBDP. The data show that 83.82% at least somewhat agreed there are appropriate sources readily available across all stakeholder groups. The data from respondents for question 16 show that more than 80% of faculty at least somewhat agree they are held appropriately accountable by parents and administration for their quality of teaching and learning, with 50% agreeing or strongly agreeing.

The qualitative data, obtained from the interviews for **RQ#2**, clearly support the overall finding that the IBDP ensures the quality of teaching and learning. Each of the three interview groups (teachers, administrators, and DP Coordinators) spoke about the effectiveness of external measures of quality assurance the IBDP provides - “validity of the assessments by the examiners” (Administrator 2) - as seen from the process of examination to “the steps along the way over the two-year period or the external exams at the end” that provides multiple points of “data and ways of looking at learning that are beneficial and create accountability” (Administrator 1). There was concrete mention of the “potential implicit bias when you're assessing your own students” that is mitigated through a system of external moderation the IBDP has in place (Administrator 2), that is further validated since “the IB itself is also held accountable to external factors such as colleges and governments” (DP Coordinator 2).

In summary, the data from both a questionnaire and interviews show that the IBDP has strong measures of accountability for the quality of education provided.

D. Research Findings for RQ#3

1. Overview

The purpose of **RQ#3** establishes the degree the IBDP's measures of accountability generate negative implications, as seen in systems of neoliberal educational reform. The findings are based upon data collected through a questionnaire and interviews. It is anticipated the IBDP will focus mainly on teaching to the exam and that there will be some negative implications about the quality of teaching possibly based upon the pressures of teaching to the exam.

2. Findings for Negative Implications from Accountability Measures in the IBDP

The literature review indicated three main negative implications of neoliberal reform related its measures of accountability: (1) an excessive focus on exam results, (2) an excessive focus on competition, and (3) a negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning, demonstrated through decreased experimentation and innovation in pedagogy, that limited teachers' abilities to know and differentiate to their students' individual learning needs. Findings will be presented sequentially based on these three categories.

a. Excessive Focus on Exam

Data obtained from questions 8 through 11 of a questionnaire show that all stakeholder groups predominantly rely upon exam-based indicators to determine the quality of teaching and

learning in the IBDP. Respondents could choose from 19 options used for quality assurance. At least 80% of the respondents selected these options:

Table 11: Degree to Which Exam Measures Relied Upon to Ensure Quality of IBDP (Q#8-11)

Evidence	% of Respondents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Overall IBDP exam results as compared to the world average</i> 	91.18%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Overall IBDP exam results</i> 	88.24%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Students' pass rates for earning the IB Diploma</i> 	82.35%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Accuracy of predicted grades</i> 	80.88%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>University Acceptances</i> 	85.29%

Question 17 of the survey asks respondents to indicate the degree to which they agree with the statement: *IBDP final exam grades are used as the main indicator of the quality of your school by (1) parents, (2) teachers, and (3) administrators*. Respondents clearly indicated agreement with this across the three stakeholder groups, with at least 80% expressing agreement for each group.

Question 18 of the questionnaire asks respondents to indicate the degree to which they agree that IBDP exam results are used as the main indicator of the quality of a student's learning for each of the three stakeholder groups. There was also clear agreement here that exam results are the main indicator for the quality of learning, with 89.40% of the three groups of respondents indicating broad agreement that parents use exam grades, with 66.6.7% of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing.

Question 19 of the survey asks respondents to indicate the degree to which they agree that IBDP exam results are used as the main indicator of the quality of a teacher's teaching for each of the three stakeholder groups. There was clear agreement that exam results are the main indicator for the quality of teaching, with 87.88% of the three groups of respondents indicating broad agreement. Parents agreed or strongly agreed - 63.64% - that exam results are the main way to evaluate the quality of teaching. In regard to respondents' view of teachers' valuation of exam grades as the main indicator of the quality of teaching, 72.73% of the three groups indicated agreement, and 78.79% of the administrators agreed.

The data from the questionnaire shows that exam results are the prime evaluation for the quality of teaching and learning in the IBDP. Qualitative data from the interviews show the focus on exam results mean time pressures are “the most frustrating part of the Diploma Programme” and that this “really puts teachers and kids under pressure...and creates unfair situations” (Administrator 3). “[T]here's too much content to cover in a normal two-year course [which] makes it difficult for me to teach as well as I would like to” while meeting the pressure to ensure students are prepared for the exams (Teacher 3). A strong focus on the IBDP exams in terms of accountability and pressure on faculty is noted; however, the degree to which this is problematic depends on the nature of the exams, which will be addressed in the discussion section of this chapter.

b. Excessive Focus on Competition

Question 23 is a two-part question that asks respondents to indicate the degree to which the IBDP promotes competition between students (a) in my classes, and (b) in the school. Data from the question (See Table: Question 23) suggest no clear decision about the degree to which the IBDP promotes competition in a teacher’s classroom, with almost half generally agreeing and 46.98% generally disagreeing. In regard to the IBDP promoting competition between students in the school, the data are not clear, while there is a slight leaning toward respondents agreeing, as seen by 63.91% in general agreement, with 36.37% of those generally disagreeing.

Table 12: Degree To Which Competition is Promoted by the IBDP (Q#23)

	In My Classes	In the School
Strongly Agree	3.03%	7.85%
Agree	22.73%	25.76%
Somewhat Agree	22.73%	30.30%
Somewhat Disagree	22.73%	18.18%
Disagree	19.7%	16.67%
Strongly Disagree	4.55%	1.52%

c. Impact on Teaching and Learning

Question 20 of the questionnaire collected data about the degree teachers feel limited in their ability to experiment and innovate in the classroom in order to prepare students for the IBDP final exams. The data show that 75.75% of all respondents generally agree with this statement. Of that majority, 24.24% somewhat agree, 33.33% agree, and 18.18% strongly agree. The

qualitative data from the interviews reflects a mixed view about this question, however. Respondents said in regard to being innovative, “truly gifted teachers find ways to innovate and change [practise]” (Administrator 3), with another respondent stating more directly, “standardised tests are no excuse for bad teaching” (Administrator 1). However, this view is countered by a respondent who said, “[t]he depth that they require us to go into is really limiting in terms of being able to innovate and to take risks, to be perfectly honest” (Teacher 2).

In talking about the public nature of the IBDP results and how schools use them for PR purposes, one respondent said, “the school sets up a lot of the culture of achievement and importance around the scores and kids and families...I think it's too hard for teachers sometimes to risk that” (DP Coordinator 3). Measures of accountability in the IBDP were also mentioned that “limit innovation because...it's difficult to customise or personalise the learning if everyone has to jump through the same hoops and takes (*sic*) the same exam at the end” (Administrator 1). The respondent spoke about “the pressures of university acceptance just on IB scores...is limiting and stifles innovation” (Administrator 1). One of the DP Coordinators offered a different opinion to this, focusing on the nature of the exams. The point is “almost every exam you're talking about involves the manipulation of, the evaluation of, the discussion in relation to, data and validity of knowledge.” A result of the demanding nature of the assessments, innovative teaching is demanded, as the traditional methods with a “didactic person at the front giving information” simply won't work (DP Coordinator 2).

Some respondents did speak about feeling “hemmed in by the time” (Teacher 1) to the degree that it limits the ability to engage in inquiry-based teaching and learning to the degree they would prefer, particularly “in classes where you have a wide mixture of ability ranges.” Another suggestion, as offered in local settings, indicates the IBDP does limit a teacher's ability to know and differentiate for their students (Teacher 2). However, other respondents talked about how the limitation of time “tends to be limitations from the school side of things rather than from the IB,” adding, “I don't feel like there's anything that the IB particularly does that would make me say, I can or can't teach in a certain way” (Teacher 3). Overall, the qualitative data highlights much more nuance in regard to the IBDP enhancing or limiting a teacher's ability to be experimental and innovative with the systems of accountability in place. While there are differing sides expressed during interviews, the qualitative data counter the quantitative data, suggesting that the findings do not clearly indicate an answer about the IBDP exams stifling experimentation and innovation.

Question 21 collected data about what teachers feel limited in their ability to know and connect with students as individuals because of pressures to prepare students for the IBDP final exams. The data show that 54.54% of respondents generally agree with this statement, and that 45.46% generally disagree. While the data from the survey favours the three degrees of agreement by only 9.08% in contrast to the three degrees of disagreement, the interview data was well summarised by the statement: “The best teachers always find a way to know their kids” (Administrator 3). Another respondent echoed this, saying being under the pressure of time and knowing your students are not mutually exclusive: “The reality is you rarely get to succeed with your end goal if you don’t know your students” (DP Coordinator 2).

Question 22 collected data about the degree to which teachers feel limited in their ability to adapt their teaching to the individual learning needs of their students because of pressures to prepare students for the IBDP final exams. A total of the three agreement options show that 71.20% of total respondents generally agree with this statement, with 33.33% of the total respondents somewhat agreeing, 22.72% agreeing, and 15.15% strongly agreeing. The qualitative data from the teacher respondents from the interviews doesn’t support the data from the surveys, as seen by the comment, “I don’t find it limits me at all [in terms of adapting to my kids’ needs]” (Teacher 2). Another teacher echoed this, noting, “I think that I can teach in the way that I want to meet the needs of, let’s say, 95% of my students” (Teacher 3). In regard to the pressures of the IBDP final exams limiting teachers’ abilities to adapt their teaching to the individual learning needs of their students, the data is ambiguous.

d. *Summary of Findings re: Negative Implications from Accountability Measures*
RQ#3 asks the degree to which the IBDP, offered in international schools, is adversely impacted by measures of accountability. In summary, the quantitative and qualitative data shows a clear and strong focus on the IBDP exams as the main indicator of the quality of teaching and learning within the programme. The degree to which the IBDP promotes competition between students in classrooms and in the school is not supported by the data. Whether measures of accountability in the IBDP negatively impacted teachers’ abilities to (a) be innovative and experimental in the classroom and (b) know and adapt teaching to the individual learning needs of students because of pressures to prepare for exams, the data is ambiguous. The quantitative data suggest that the negative implication found in neoliberal-based paradigms is present in the IBDP; however, the qualitative data suggests the opposite.

In terms of connecting to Biesta's criteria of a good education, the strong focus on accountability through the IBDP exams links to the criterion of qualification and suggests an overreliance on serving this end, at the expense of realizing the other two criteria of a good education, socialization and subjectification.

E. Findings for RQ#4

1. Overview

The purpose of **RQ#4** is to establish the degree to which the IBDP prepares students academically and socially for university. The findings presented are based upon data collected through the quantitatively based questionnaire and the qualitatively based interviews. It is anticipated that the IBDP will meet these ends.

2. Findings for University Preparation

Question 27 asks respondents to indicate the degree to which the IBDP prepares students well with key knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for academic success in university. And Question 28 asks respondents to indicate the degree to which the IBDP prepares students well with key knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for successful social integration in university. More than 98.48% of the respondents are in broad agreement that the IBDP prepares students academically and findings show that 87.87% present in broad agreement that the IBDP prepares students socially.

Table 13: Degree To Which IBDP Prepares Students for University (Q#27)

	Academically	Socially
Strongly Agree	42.42%	21.21%
Agree	34.85%	36.36%
Somewhat Agree	21.21%	30.30%
Somewhat Disagree	0%	7.58%
Disagree	0%	4.55%
Strongly Disagree	1.52%	0%

The qualitative data obtained from the interviews about **RQ#4** is clear, with each of the nine respondents interviewed emphatically agreeing that the IBDP prepares students well for

academic success in university. The data is unequivocal as noted by such responses as; “there's no doubt that kids are well prepared. It's a rigorous course; they're taught to think critically; they're given opportunities to really think about how they learn, and how they learn best, and quite a bit of freedom to try to make that happen” (Administrator 3). Several respondents noted how they have heard from numerous students through many years. Respondents indicate the first year of university is easier than the last year of IBDP and they spoke about how well-prepared they were because of the academic rigour of the IBDP that taught them to analyse, write well, think critically, and perhaps most importantly, manage their time well (Administrator 1; Administrator 2; Teacher 1; Teacher 2; Teacher 3; DP Coordinator 2).

The qualitative data about the IBDP preparing students for social integration for university is ambiguous. Respondents suggested that students are not purposefully prepared for social independence as a result of their experiences in the IBDP. The qualitative data described social preparation as “a function of what the school in its local context brings to life” (Administrator 3). One respondent said directly, “I don't think the IB addresses that [social preparation] at all” (Administrator 1). Respondents typically noted there is “a lot of stress from kids having to do the IB” (Administrator 1), with respondents noting the IBDP “prepares the kids for stress in university because they'd been in a stressful situation in high school” (Administrator 1). The data speaks to a common theme in regard to the social preparation the IBDP – because the IBDP is “such a demanding programme...it doesn't give students the chance to have a whole life while they're actually in [it]” (Teacher 2). The end result, by virtue of making it through the IBDP, indicates students find university socially easy to manage (Administrator 2; Teacher 1; Teacher 2; DP Coordinator 3). In this sense, the IBDP is not purposeful in creating a stressful programme of study that overwhelms kids in order to prepare them for the demands of university. Results indicate the preparation of students' social integration into university about managing stress seems a by-product of the IBDP.

In summary, findings for **RQ#4** show the IBDP offered in international schools thoroughly prepares students for academic success in university. The quantitative data show that the IBDP successfully prepares students for successful social integration in university, but further data later obtained from the interviews speak to the successful preparation not being a result of purposeful design of the IBDP, but rather coincidentally, as a result of making it through a demanding programme. These results show that in terms of serving Biesta's criterion of *qualification* the IBDP does well, but that in terms of serving Biesta's criterion of *socialization*,

the IBDP does not purposefully realize this goal. In combination – the over serving of university preparation and the under serving of purposefully realizing the social preparation for university – may well be problematic in terms of the IBDP’s ability to serve the final criterion of *subjectification*.

F. Research Findings for RQ#5

1. Evaluating the Degree to which the IBDP Realises *Subjectification*

a. Introduction

RQ#5 explores the degree to which the IBDP meets Biesta’s defining characteristic of a *good education, subjectification*. The findings are based on Part Two of the interview questions, created to generate qualitative data in regard to the following composite elements that make up Biesta’s concept of *subjectification*:

- the promotion of active, independent learners who have agency (*interview question #1*)
- the provision of learning experiences that disrupt and challenge students’ existing ways of being, thinking, and doing (*interview question #2*)
- the promotion of critically aware and reflective learners (*interview question #s 3 & 4*)
- the promotion of learners who actively challenge self and community (*interview question #5*)
- the provision of learning experiences that expect, empower, and engage students in higher-order thinking skills (*interview question #6*)
- the provision of learning experiences that expect, empower, and engage students in knowledge creation as a result of their evaluation, analysis, and synthesis (*interview question #7*)

It is anticipated that the IBDP meets the defining criteria of *subjectification* according to these criteria.

b. Promotion of Active, Independent Learners Who Have Agency

The degree to which the IBDP educates students to be active, independent learners in relation to the agency they have in their learning was explored. Respondents indicated students, who have agency in the IBDP, are defined as being able to choose the six courses they study during the two years of the programme; and students are able to choose the three subjects that they will take at Higher Level (Teacher 1; Teacher 2; DP Coordinator 1; Administrator 3).

However, this choice may be viewed as “basic” (Teacher 1) and “somewhat tokenistic” (DP Coordinator 3), since within the requirements there are “so many prescribed requirements that...there is only the illusion of openness” (Teacher 1). Students choose subjects based upon what they hope to study at university, and “the fact that you have a prescribed curriculum gets in the way of students taking control of their own learning because...ultimately, there is that exam at the end that we must teach to” (Teacher 3). In the sense that students are able to shape their programme of study, the data indicates an element of control placed in the students’ hands.

The interview data show the IBDP promotes students as active, independent learners through their coursework, or Internal Assessment (IA) (Administrator 1; Administrator 2; Administrator 3; Teacher 1; Teacher 2; Teacher 3). Each IBDP subject has an assessment component that counts about 25% of their overall mark, with the other 75% coming from the end-of-programme exam. There are Internal Assessment (IA) requirements for each class, including science. For example, the expectations are that “students plan, carry out, and analyse data from an experiment that they've done on their own...meaning that you're teaching them a lot of how to be independent and how to think on their own” (Teacher 3). The fact that students get to choose the topic to focus on in their IA indicates the IBDP promotes agency and fosters independence in student learning.

The other main area through which the qualitative data show the IBDP promotes students being active and independent in their learning is through the IBDP Core (Administrator 1; Administrator 2; Administrator 3; Teacher 1; Teacher 3; DP Coordinator 2). Through the Extended Essay (EE), students choose the subject and thesis for their EE independently. They are expected to work through a process during the course of the year and write an essay of at least 4,000 words. The CAS requirements also have students design and engage in various activities based upon student interest across the arts, physical activities, and service. Finally, within ToK, students have a choice about a topic for both assessment pieces and the presentation format for the internal assessment. Through the IBDP Core, students are given “pretty cool options to really take ownership over things that they care about and to create action, and to learn how - through the Extended Essay, ToK, and CAS - students really delve into something that they care about” (Administrator 3). One of the best parts of the IBDP Core in promoting student agency and independence is the high degree of active involvement as a result of “having the freedom to...follow a passion” (Administrator 2).

The IBDP does provide opportunities for students to be active, independent learners who have agency in their learning, based upon the internal assessment, the IBDP Core, and to a limited degree, course selection.

c. Provision of Learning Experiences that Disrupt and Challenge

The IBDP expects and allows for learning experiences that are designed to disrupt and challenge students' existing ways of being, thinking, and doing. Data from the interviews show that the IBDP Core allows for learning experiences that not only encourage student agency and independence, but also expects students to challenge their existing ways of being, thinking, and doing (Administrator 3; Administrator 2; Administrator 1; DP Coordinator 1; DP Coordinator 2; Teacher 1). In terms of the Core, ToK is the main way learning experiences are designed to disrupt and challenge students, as "that's the whole point of ToK!" (Teacher 2). ToK and the Core "provide opportunities for kids and to push them into really rethinking things...that idea of critical thinking and really understanding perspectives – it does ask them to look outside of their own belief system and values, from the whole" (Administrator 3). A key element to the success of the IBDP Core in promoting this disruption is that "reflection has been a huge part of the process," because it pushes students to describe explicitly how their learning experiences have changed them, with this element being the driving force of the Core's objectives (DP Coordinator 1).

In terms of the IBDP subject areas purposefully bringing about disruptive learning experiences, interview data show that this "depends on the subject, but the way the IB is structured, its overall intention from as far as I can tell, is not to do that" (Administrator 1). In terms of purposefully expecting this, one respondent said that subject areas "do not provide lots of opportunities for that," and the result is, "the exam is a big stumbling block for a lot of this as many of the questions are still closed-ended" (DP Coordinator 3). In contrast to this view, another data point shows that disruption is present through the subject area "all the time" as a result of the expectation "written into the rubrics, it's clearly in the documentation that we have to look at it through different perspectives" (Teacher 2). Considering the IBDP subjects bringing about purposefully disruptive learning experiences, the data is ambiguous.

One data point from the interviews suggests that the IBDP disrupts students' existing ways of being, thinking, and doing, by virtue of the incredibly high degree of rigour in the programme (Administrator 2). The academic demands of the IBDP mean that "in its purest form, you're

teaching through university-level classes” and as a result of that “it's going to push students’ limits” (Administrator 2). The rigour across all subject areas and components of the programme pushes students “globally in the sense that you're touching all disciplines” and as a result of having high expectations of students across a diverse range of subject areas the IBDP disrupts and challenges students (Administrator 2). In this sense, the overall demands of the programme disrupt students’ existing ways of being, thinking, and doing as students progress through the programme; however, the data from *RQ#1* does not suggest the IBDP is deliberate in design in trying to realise this.

Overall, the data does suggest that the IBDP realises the goal of engaging students in disruptive learning experiences through the IBDP Core as well as through the rigour of the programme.

d. Promotion of Critically Aware & Reflective Learners

As the IBDP educates students to be critically aware and self-reflective as learners, data from the interviews – evaluating the degree of progress – show the IBDP Core is highly effective in promoting critically aware and reflective students, particularly through students’ experiences in CAS and ToK (Administrator 3; Teacher 1; Teacher 2; Teacher 3; DP Coordinator 1; DP Coordinator 2; Administrator 1; Administrator 2). The way students demonstrate their completion of two years’ worth of experiences in CAS is through a reflective portfolio framed based on learning objectives. These objectives are grounded in students’ reflecting on how they have changed, and how they have affected change, based upon their experiences (DP Coordinator 1; DP Coordinator 2). This level of reflection is also present in ToK where students complete reflections as part of their final assessment for ToK (DP Coordinator 1).

The IBDP also engages students in critical reflection across all of the subject areas, as there is an expectation that ToK is integrated into each course, and “you can't find a guide or a textbook now, even in Math, that doesn't have something that provokes the teacher to engage with that [critical thinking]” (DP Coordinator 2). Moreover, the IA work that students complete for certain subject areas necessarily requires students to engage in reflection. Of the six subject groups, each builds reflective expectations into the assessment criteria for the internal assessment. Most also provide for the external assessment (DP Coordinator 1; DP Coordinator 2; DP Coordinator 3; Teacher 1; Administrator 2). Overall, the IBDP educates students to be critically aware and self-reflective as learners.

e. Promotion of Learners who Actively Challenge Self & Community

The degree to which the IBDP expects, empowers, and provides opportunities for students to actively challenge and improve themselves and their communities through their critical analysis and reflection, data show the intended design of the IBDP is not well-realised in practise, as summarised by the statement, “I think they pay lip service to it, but they don't allow the space for it” (Administrator 2).

The data clearly show that the IBDP Core, and particularly the CAS programme, “provides the biggest opportunity” to actively challenge self and community in order to bring about change (Administrator 1). However, while “there were certainly things that students were invited to do or that the CAS programme left open for kids to do...students fall into a trap of simply trying to tick boxes” (Teacher 1). The IBDP has attempted to bring about changes to counter this. For example, by moving away from counting hours as a rigorous way of monitoring accountability, but that has led to students being able to “work the system in a different way,” as there is no longer any stringent measure of accountability (Teacher 3). The desire to have students challenge self and community to bring about change “is the ideal they expect,” but the challenge is building skills in students to realise the ideal, as there is a huge gap “between coming up with an understanding of what a solution is and putting it into action” (DP Coordinator 3).

The IBDP expects schools to provide opportunities for students to actively challenge and improve themselves and their communities as a result of their critical analysis and reflection. However, the data from the interviews do not show this is meaningfully realised in practise.

f. Expect, Empower, & Engage in Higher-Order Thinking Skills

The degree to which the IBDP expects, empowers, and provides opportunities for students to engage in higher-order thinking skills - such as evaluation, analysis, and synthesis - data from the interviews clearly indicate the IBDP expects and empowers higher-order thinking skills through teaching and learning (Administrator 3; Administrator 2; Teacher 2; Administrator 1; Teacher 1). In terms of bringing higher-order thinking skills to life, “this is a strength and...all courses ask students to do that” (Administrator 3). In terms of the IBDP’s overall quality, “that's the strongest point. I've seen that across the table in many areas, in all disciplines”

(Administrator 2). Within the IBDP, “the focus is not on rote learning. The focus is not on memorization of names, dates, facts, et cetera...it's absolutely asking for those higher-order thinking” (Teacher 1) and then moving students beyond, expecting “a deeper level of thinking and being able to apply knowledge to new situations” (Teacher 3).

The qualitative data analysis identifies the Internal Assessment (IA) as a key avenue through which the IBDP expects, empowers, and provides opportunities for students to engage in higher-order thinking skills (DP Coordinator 1; DP Coordinator 2; Teacher 3; Administrator 3). In terms of what is asked of students' coursework, “evaluation and analysing are a huge component of what we do in the science IA's...[and] this certainly gets students to a higher order of thinking” (Teacher 3). From a vantage point across the IBDP, “the IA is an incredibly difficult higher-order thinking thing. It takes months for the kids to come around to. It's not something that you can just simply give them a topic and have them run and go through it. It takes time and the acquiring of specific skills that they have to direct” (DP Coordinator 3).

The data also identify the prescribed assessment criteria for each subject as another way the IBDP expects, empowers, and provides opportunities for students to engage in higher-order thinking skills (DP Coordinator 1; DP Coordinator 2; Administrator 3; Administrator 2; Teacher 2). Overall, in the IBDP exams, “there's less knowledge-based assessments and more thinking-based.” (Administrator 3). In terms of promoting higher-order thinking, “the assessments in themselves expect that...[and] are backing that up” (Administrator 2). The promotion of higher-order thinking skills is “in the rubrics” and students are explicitly expected to “look at different perspectives, evaluate those perspectives, and talk about the values and limitations of them. It's always about that. It's really integral to the way that the subject is taught” (Teacher 2).

Overall, the data clearly show that the IBDP expects, empowers, and provides opportunities for students to engage in higher-order thinking skills such as evaluation, analysis, and synthesis.

g. Expect, Empower, & Engage in Knowledge Creation

The degree to which the IBDP expects, empowers, and provides opportunities for students to create knowledge as a result of their evaluation, analysis, and synthesis, data show the IBDP Core programme realises this (Administrator 3; Teacher 1; Teacher 2; DP Coordinator 1; DP

Coordinator 1; DP Coordinator 3;). ToK provides freedom for students to discover their own way of understanding and expects students to be able to justify their unique perspectives (DP Coordinator 2). The EE excels in allowing students to create knowledge through the choice of their own open-ended research question they pursue during the course of the two-year programme (Administrator 3; Teacher 1; Teacher 2; DP Coordinator 1; DP Coordinator 1; DP Coordinator 3). One example given was within the discipline of History, where a student chose to write an extended essay “exploring the relationship between Mao and Tito, which is one that isn’t really studied” (Teacher 2). The respondent spoke about how the student created a new and novel point of contrast outside of the course curriculum, and how it represented not only the chance to create, but also represented a clear opportunity for agency over one’s learning.

Beyond the IBDP Core, data show some divergence in views in regard to the degree the IBDP expects and empowers students to create knowledge. One data point notes that “[e]very class has some component that intentionally allows for some of that knowledge creation, but...I would posit that that’s a very small component of the IB. It’s not a major feature of the IB” (Administrator 1). In contrast to this point of view, another respondent said, in recent years, “there’s been a movement away from bulk IA’s, where everyone would do the same thing,” allowing for students to create knowledge based upon their own topics of interest (DP Coordinator 2). For their IA work, programme expectations in the rubrics ask students “to do their own investigation, based upon their own interpretations, becoming far more personalised than it was” (DP Coordinator 2). Another respondent noted, “I’m trying to get my kids to not view me as the source of knowledge, but to help them construct their knowledge from what we’re doing in class” (Teacher 3). This element of the IBDP is foundational, and “everything about it is grounded in this idea of constructivism toward inquiry and agency...it’s not just a curriculum, it is a pedagogical methodology; it is an educational philosophy; and those two things are very clearly placed upon the teacher as an expectation” (DP Coordinator 2).

At a broader level, certain subjects have a greater allowance and encouragement for students’ creating knowledge, particularly in the Arts and Humanities, and reportedly less so in Math and the Sciences (Administrator 2; DP Coordinator 2; Teacher 1). Respondents noted that in the Arts, students keep a process journal that is used to provide background and research to then go on and ultimately create their own pieces, whether in Visual Arts, Theatre Arts, or Film (Administrator 2; DP Coordinator 2; Teacher 1). While the data are not conclusive, most data

points indicate that subject areas expect and empower students and provide opportunities for students to create knowledge and that is realised.

Overall, the data show that the IBDP does expect, empower, and provide opportunities for students to create knowledge as a result of their evaluation, analysis, and synthesis.

2. Summary of the Degree to which the IBDP Realises *Subjectification*

In summarizing the degree to which Biesta's criterion of *subjectification* is met in practise, the qualitative data show that the IBDP:

- promotes active, independent learners who have agency (*interview question 1*).
- realises learning experiences that disrupt and challenge students' existing ways of being, thinking, and doing (*interview question 2*).
- promotes critically aware and reflective learners (*interview questions 3 & 4*).
- expects learners to actively challenge self and community but does not meaningfully realise this (*interview question 5*).
- provides learning experiences that expect, empower and engage students in higher-order thinking skills (*interview question 6*).
- provides learning experiences that expect, empower, and engage students in knowledge creation as a result of their evaluation, analysis, and synthesis (*interview question 7*).

Overall, in regard to **RQ#5**, the qualitative data from the interviews suggest that the IBDP does realise Biesta's defining tenet of *subjectification*.

G. Summary of Research Findings

Sections 4.1 through 4.6 present summary findings for each of the five research questions following the analysis of data collected from the research stages. The major findings show that:

- the IBDP does represent a *good education* in theoretical design, according to Biesta's criteria;
- the IBDP does provide a high degree of accountability for the quality of education;
- the IBDP, while highly focused on exam results as the main metric of quality, is not adversely impacted by its measures of accountability;
- the IBDP prepares students well for university academically, as well as socially;

- therefore, the IBDP also meets Biesta's criteria of *qualification* and *socialization* as elements of a *good education*;
- the IBDP realises Biesta's defining characteristic of a *good education*, *subjectification*.
- Overall, the IBDP realises Biesta's conceptualization of a *good education* in practise.

Chapter 5: Discussion

A. Overview

The findings of the thesis show that the IBDP represents a *good education* in its theoretical design according to Biesta's criteria, and that it realizes a *good education* in practice; however, an holistic evaluation of the findings show that the IBDP's system of accountability as grounded in objective metrics is problematic in regards to achieving a *good education* to any meaningful degree. An argument emerges showing that what is at the core of the potentiality of a *good education* within the IBDP is not sufficiently valued through its measures of accountability. The undervaluation of the IBDP Core and Learner Profile leads to what is argued as the *underproduction of subjectification*, translating into a market failure, with the impact of neoliberalism on the IBDP being at the heart of the problem. Further, the argument suggests that the ways in which the IBDP employs neoliberal means to ensure its growth and success, actively limits its potential to fully realize a *good education*.

B. The IBDP Core & the Learner Profile: Do they really matter?

1. Overview

The IBDP represents a good education according to Biesta's criteria in its theoretical design as analyzed in the investigation of *RQ#1*. From its pedagogical philosophy and expectations, to the corresponding assessment philosophy, along with the expectation of the dispositions that students come to embody as seen through the Learner Profile, to the components of the Core, ToK, the EE, and CAS, the design of the IBDP offers excellent ways through which subjectification *could be realized*. Framed more broadly, some suggest that through the completion of the Core requirements, the IBDP can be seen as “an exception to the neglect of 21st Century skills” needed for students to become well prepared and successful as global citizens (Wright, Ewan & Lee, 2014). With this said, however, “no empirical studies have investigated the relationship between the entirety of the DP experience and students' academic civic mindedness and model citizenship” (Rosefsky Saavedra, A, 2016). While the concepts of *civic mindedness* and *model citizenship* do not equate perfectly to Biesta's concept of *subjectification*, the research literature notes that “there has been little rigorous empirical research on the IB” (Luke, Shield, & Hincksman, 2012, pg. 314). While the IBDP has the potential to realize a good education via *subjectification*, the research gap makes this thesis relevant in highlighting the main holistic finding that the key distinguishing elements of the IBDP that could produce a *good education* are not adequately valued, calling into question the degree to which a *good education* can be meaningfully realized.

2. Signalling What Is (and Isn't) Valued in the IBDP

The findings of the thesis show that the IBDP Core and the Learner Profile – the main avenues that could bring *subjectification* to life within the IBDP – are not valued. The quantitative results show that stakeholders generally value these two elements as indicators of success, but that they are not in any way significant, for example with fewer than 5% of parents, teachers, and administrators ranking measures associated with the Learner Profile or the IBDP Core in their top four choices of determining the quality of teaching and learning in a school. The findings from the qualitative data were clear in regards to the lack of valuation of these two elements of the IBDP as evidenced by such comments as:

- “for many the Core is just an exercise in ticking boxes” (Teacher 1)
- “But ... is it [ToK] valued? It is not assessed” (DP Coordinator 1)
- “It [the Learner Profile] is another kind of add-on (Administrator 3).
- “there is a place of tension because most of your teachers are happy going through the curriculum and delivering and going to the exam ... and it's easy to fall into the trap of *just doing TOK* as another checkbox I need to do” (Teacher 1).

Broader research supports the findings of the thesis, noting that “students and teachers see CAS solely through the lens of counting hours” (Rosefsky Saavedra, A, 2016, pg. 6). In terms of students valuing their CAS experiences, the value comes down to what students put into it rather than what the IBDP actually brings to life as meaningful educational experiences. In this sense, few students appear to be meaningfully benefitting from the learning, with most students typically *logging hours* (Rosefsky Saavedra, A, 2016, pg. 7). An emerging problem implied from the research is that the success of the IBDP Core is context dependent rather than programmatically dependent. Teachers in charge of bringing the Core to life express frustration and challenge as there is little support offered by the IBDP in regards to how to meaningfully bring this element of the program to life other than the guide books, pointing again to the success of the IBDP realizing a *good education* being contextual and based upon a schools’ local circumstances (Rosefsky-Saavedra, A, 2016).

The lack of engagement in the IBDP Core and the Learner profile comes about as *the grind to master content is too much*; the result is that a school’s focus on the IBDP Core *takes the back seat* to preparing students for the exams (Rosefsky Saavedra, A, 2016, pg. 9). In terms of what IBDP teachers focus on day to day in the classroom, “everything is about the test - we do what

we are evaluated on” (Rosefsky Saavedra, A, 2016, pg. 9). The IBDP prepares students to be academically successful in university, but ends up blindly serving this goal by focusing almost exclusively on exam-based measures of academic success (Frank-Gemmill, 2013; Fitzgerald, 2015; Sjogren & Campbell, 2003). In this sense, the IBDP neglects to realize a *good education* as a result of over-serving a perceived element of success as validated by the system of accountability.

The research literature points to how well the IBDP prepares students for university, and shows how much more successful they are in university as compared to non-IBDP graduates (Frank-Gemmill, 2013). To justify the quality of the IBDP and its benefits of academic success, research focuses on correlating academic success in university to IBDP exam results, even focusing in on HL versus SL results, as well as trying to establish links between Math results and overall success in the IBDP as correlated to grades in university (Frank-Gemmill, 2013). The focus within the research literature on academic success in university, as derived from academic success in the IBDP as determined by grades, further illustrates how the IBDP Core and the Learner Profile are undervalued by signaling the significance of subject-based grades. While there are technically grades awarded for the IBDP Core, the measures of accountability further signal they are not important as they “carry much less weight relative to other IBDP courses for final IBDP marks” (Wright, Ewan & Lee, 2014, pg. 212). Moreover, the way in which the IBDP Core points are referred to as *Bonus Marks* underlines their undervaluation, suggesting they are optional *add-ons* or *boxes to tick*.

The nature of the learning intended to emerge from students through the IBDP Core and the Learner Profile also contribute to their undervaluation. The learning outcomes of the IBDP Core are not grounded in objective content and knowledge – they are, as Biesta notes of *subjectification, ontologically weak*. Assessing authentic engagement and learning in CAS activities and determining the degree to which dispositions are realized is problematic “considering the challenges of quantifying the development of noncognitive interpersonal skills (Wright, Ewan & Lee, 2014’ pg. 212). As a result, there are serious challenges in designing a system of accountability that doesn’t corrupt the aims and intentions the IBDP Core and Learner Profile by boiling them down into standardized, objective measures of success. Looking beyond the IBDP, a quality education is one that has students emerge who are able to lead healthy, meaningfully, socially cohesive, and productive lives, both personally and professionally (Nussbaum, 2006; Ladd & Fiske, 2006; Plank, 2013; Baltodano, 2012;

Biesta, 2016). A rich, meaningful education asks that students independently bring to life something new and novel as a result of internal change (De Lissovoy, 2015; Dewey, 1938). Such aims and objectives of a quality education cannot be standardized across students – measures of success must be grounded in the subjective nature of each individual learner. These aims and objectives must be valued through the system of accountability employed to ensure the realization thereof, or else they will be marginalized, as is the case in the IBDP.

The findings from **RQ#5** show that IBDP students do acquire higher order thinking skills exceptionally well, reflecting “the strongest point” of the IBDP (Administrator 2; DP Coordinator 1; DP Coordinator 2; Administrator 3; Administrator 2; Teacher 2). One challenge in regards to this, however, is that the systems of accountability linked to all assessment are standardized across all students in the program globally. In this sense, “as soon as you refer to the idea of a test, you’re referring to something that is static [as] it is applied to tens of thousands of students” (Administrator 1). Perhaps the highest goal of *subjectification* is for students to create new and novel solutions – to create knowledge. At the heart of Biesta’s *good education* is a goal that is, as he claims, *ontologically weak* – a goal that cannot be determined ahead of the learning process, as the outcome of a good education will be different for each student. Given this, the results of any assessment or system of accountability of the assessments cannot be standardized beyond a given individual learner, let alone across tens of thousands of students in thousands of school settings. The defining criterion that enables the realization of a *good education* is grounded in measures of success that are *fundamentally immeasurable in an objective sense*. This vision of success is similar to that put forth from a paradigm grounded in the significance of semiotics, in which objective measures of success cannot be established, as quality learning “valorizes individual difference and unpredictability” and as a result must actively embrace “an avoidance of measures intended to determine, rather than to manage, the resulting outcomes” (Stables & Gough, 2006, p. 285). A system of accountability within a good education must find a way to move beyond the desire to standardize results – it must move into a system of accountability that is grounded in the individual learner. In this way, the IBDP in serving neoliberal ends of accountability in a manner that is standardized again marginalizes its own potential of achieving a *good education* as a result of the its systems of accountability not allowing for the inclusion of educational ends not measurable by objective standards, showing a lack of value placed on these very ends – this lack of value translating into a lack of production.

Understanding what to value within a given context, schools can establish signs and signals explicitly, as well as implicitly. From the neoliberal viewpoint, we tend to act “independently, and wholly self-interested” with the goal of maximizing our utility (Coleman, 1998, p. S95). When considering how various stakeholders within schools determine what to value, “everything that everybody does can potentially be understood as responses to signs or signals” (Stables & Gough, 2006, p. 273). Effectively, the measures of accountability that a school uses “stand for [and] represent the worth, quality, or value of an individual or organization within a field of judgement” (Ball, 2000, p. 1). Teachers respond to systems that hold them accountable in order to try to establish worth and value, and when there are multiple signs and signals, teachers will typically defer to what they see as the driving signs and signals of quality in a given context (Ball, 2000). Within an educational paradigm framed by neoliberal ideology, grades on standardised tests have become the main signals of success (Ball, 2000). Findings of this thesis indicate that the issue that was problematic for neoliberally framed systems of education are present within the IBDP, in spite of its potential to realise a *good education*. There is pressure on teachers to “produce 7s,” or the highest marks on exams, which forces teachers to “coach students to jump through the hoops and follow the script” in order to achieve high exam scores (Administrator 1). As a result of the pressures applied by parents, teachers, and administrators, students end up feeling internally pressured to earn high marks to get into university, and “end up looking for the shortcuts to simply what would be indications of that, rather than it being the genuine article in terms of thinking” (Teacher 1).

The findings of the thesis, as supported by broader research, show that the IBDP as it comes to life fundamentally reflects the values of neoliberalism, through its focus on standardized measures of success, grounded in exam-based academic success. The next section below will argue how this undervaluation equates to a market failure in regards to international schools offering the IBDP as seen through their underproduction of a *good education*.

C. The IBDP as a Market Failure: not a good (enough) education

Market failures occur when the total costs or benefits to parties internal and external to a transaction between producer or consumer are not captured in the pricing of a good or service (Backhouse & Medema, 2012; Shaw, 2010). Markets operate successfully when they achieve *pareto-efficiency*, whereby resources are allocated in a way that maximises the total benefits and minimises the total costs from a societal point of view (King, 2007; Shaw, 2010; Williams, 2016). This means that markets fail when *pareto-efficiency* does not exist, as shown by

resources not adequately producing a given level of output, according to the total desired benefits, as seen by a society. Markets tend to fail when access to information by consumers and producers, in regard to price and quality, is asymmetrical or incomplete (Ladd & Fiske, 2007 p. 30). The asymmetrical or incomplete information means the total benefits of the good or service are being undervalued, as all positives of the good or service are not considered. When the total benefits are not fully considered, it means that the good or service is underproduced (Backhouse & Medema, 2012; Shaw, 2010).

The findings of this thesis show a clear difference in interpretation of what constitutes quality of the IBDP through its theoretical design, its measures of accountability, and what is valued by stakeholders at a given school, as well as stakeholders in universities. The system of accountability and key stakeholders place a premium on exam-based evidences of quality, marginalising other evidences of quality, particularly those integrally connected to elements of the IBDP that best allow for the realisation of *subjectification*. The IBDP Core and Learner Profile are effectively diminished due to their undervaluation within IBDP schools, leading to the underproduction of *subjectification*, due to an asymmetrical and/or incomplete understanding of what the IBDP is meant to realise; the results of this underproduction of subjectification are a market failure as the total benefits of the IBDP as seen through its design and its potential to produce the third and defining criterion – *subjectification* - are not fully realized. It is important to note that the label of ‘market failure’ is not an absolute concept as could be interpreted. In this context, the IBDP does realize the first two criteria of Biesta’s model – qualification and socialization – and also does realize of subjectification in practice to a degree. This said, it is important to formally label this underproduction of subjectification as a market failure in the economic sense, as the total benefits of the IBDP are not realized. Further, it is important to formally highlight this as in an economic sense, the existence of a market failure provides for an opening for governmental involvement, as noted earlier. In the case of the IBDP, governmental involvement could help ensure that the key elements that allow the IBDP to realize subjectification are not marginalized, as indicated in these findings. It is also important to stress that the market failure is just in terms of the realization of subjectification, the defining criterion of Biesta’s model. The IBDP realizes the first two criteria, and does also bring to life the third. It is just that the total benefits of the program through the realization of subjectification are not brought to life through the market.

Within IBDP schools, there is “a disconnection between what IB programmes demand and the cultural realities of teaching in and leading schools” (Walker & Lee, 2018, p. 477). The disconnection is seen through differing expectations of stakeholders in a given school’s context about what the IBDP should produce. Many parents, for example, put extreme pressures on students and teacher to “produce 7s” (Administrator 1). Beyond this intellectual disconnection, there are also simply “gaps between the skills, knowledge, and capacities required to make the programmes work” (Walker & Lee, 2018, p. 477). Though the IBDP is intended to, and is poised to, realise a *good education* across all elements of its design, the ways in which it can be standardised are only through exam-based measures of success.

While the IBDP is intended to be acontextual, the information and skill gaps that exist between school settings mean that the degree to which the IBDP realises a *good education* depends on a school’s local context. The findings show that the overall quality of programme delivery of the IBDP “comes down to the schools and the teachers” (Teacher 2). The IBDP’s measures of accountability “definitely help the perception that the programme is equal no matter where you take it,” but in reality, there is still a great deal of variation that is a function of the internal functioning of the school, as well as a function of the quality of teachers (Administrator 3). While there are clear measures of external accountability, “the real quality assurance is in the teacher” (Administrator 2). The problem is that if a given teacher or school doesn’t value programmatic elements that will support *subjectification*, a *good education* will not be adequately realised.

The broader research supports the view that the quality of the IBDP in a school is highly dependent on the quality of the teacher, with commitment to the IBDP by a teacher being a key factor in its success (Halicioglu, 2008). Realizing key dispositional outcomes through the IBDP Core and the Learner Profile depends on the success of teaching and learning and develop through a given teacher’s personal orientation as well as strength of conviction. This means it is the person in front of the student who makes the difference rather than the curriculum (Rosefsky Saavedra, 2016, p. 7). Other non-curricular factors are also of greater significance, like the school’s policies in regard to student management, diversity in student culture, examples set by teachers in their actions, nature of relationships in the school, attitudes and expectations of the teachers, how conflicts are resolved, as well the school’s own guiding statements and philosophy (Wilkinson & Hayden, 2010). Local contextual elements within a school such as the informal interactions between students and teachers beyond the direct

classroom experiences are of the greatest importance in regard to realising key dispositions (Wilkinson & Hayden, 2010). In this sense, the degree to which local, school-based factors beyond the programmatic workings and expectations of the IBDP shows that the IBDP is not a *universal construct* able to significantly bring about the production of *subjectification* independent of local context (Dvir, Shields, & Yemini, 2018).

The argument emerging from the findings shows the core of the potentiality of a *good education* in its theoretical design within the IBDP is not sufficiently signalled as valuable as a result of the effect local context plays on programme delivery, and the methods of accountability employed by the IBDP. While capable of being much more, the IBDP operates like any neoliberally framed model of education, in spite of its better design. In this sense, the cynical view that the IBDP remains “a sausage factory that is just creating a better version of the same old sausage” is borne out in the holistic findings of this thesis (Administrator 1). The outcome is the degree to which an IBDP actually realises a *good education* is not programme-dependent, but rather dependent on a given school’s context.

D. The IBDP & Neoliberalism: A problematic relationship

A goal of this thesis was to evaluate the degree to which the IBDP could build on the neoliberal goal of providing accountability while realising a better education than that of neoliberal reform. Ironically, an argument emerges from the analysis of the overall findings suggesting the IBDP not only falls prey to the very impacts of neoliberal reform this thesis expected it would overcome, but actually operates in accordance with neoliberalism, further fostering it.

The impact of neoliberalism on the IBDP is seen through one of its *perceived* strengths – that the IBDP prepares students well for academic success in university. The IBDP is widely accepted as a strong university entry qualification, with students who earn the IBDP making a better transition into university, being more likely to earn Honours Degrees, and tending to be admitted to the most competitive universities (Frank-Gemmill, 2013). The research notes that a student’s achievement in the IBDP not only predicts achievement in university, but IBDP graduates earn significantly better results than students who graduated from non-IBDP schools (Frank-Gemmill, 2013, p. 50). Such findings from the research literature echo the results from the data collected to analyse **RQ#4** that show the IBDP clearly prepares students well for academic success in university. However, while seemingly a clear strength, “scholarly empirical validation for the success of its graduates is surprisingly scant” (Fitzgerald, 2015, p.

3). With limited research about the academic benefits of the IBDP for its graduates, key questions emerge: *To what degree is academic preparation for university a valid measure of success in determining quality of education? What are the implications of valuing academic preparation for university as a key indicator?*

Recent studies investigating the success of IBDP graduates in Canadian universities show admissions officers are “very positively disposed towards the IBDP” (Fitzgerald, 2015, pg. 22). This said, there is little research in regards to what being *better prepared* means beyond the achievement of grade-based measures of success, let alone how earning better grades in the IBDP is “evident in specific skill areas” developed in university (Fitzgerald, 2015). The degree to which IBDP graduates specifically do better in university in regards to communication skills, research skills, and being more effective problem solvers, for example, is not borne out in the research data (Fitzgerald, 2015). In this sense, the broader research is not clear in regards to why universities are positively disposed to them aside from simply earning better grades and having higher success rates of graduation (Fitzgerald, 2015). Skeptically, one could wonder if universities value IBDP graduates as they are less likely to drop out and therefore more likely to pay four years’ worth of fees.

The widely held perception that IBDP graduates are better prepared for university is grounded in the IB’s direct efforts to create this narrative via its *powerful marketing and training presence* across national settings (Fitzgerald, 2015, pg. 27). The IB’s marketing is active, extensive, and purposeful in the promotion of the message that the IBDP is an academically rigorous program designed to provide an excellent foundational preparation for success in university, sharing extensive data about the success rates of IBDP graduates in university; this is problematic as the messaging is *socially and discursively constructed* by the IB in order to “effectively sell universities, and in turn sell students, on the value of the IBDP ” (Fitzgerald, 2015, pg. 23).

The IBDP has been successful in its marketing. The levels of growth in international schooling around the world has boomed and has continued to increase in pace. There were some 50 international schools in the 1960’s, over 7,000 in 2018, and by 2022 it is expected that there will be more than 11,000 international schools globally, teaching more than six million students (Dvir, Shields, & Yemini, 2018). With the growth and success of the IBDP globally, it has come to be “depicted as synonymous to the provision of international education” (Dvir,

Shields, & Yemini, 2018, pg. 455) to such a degree of success that it “is one of the most recognized education brands globally” (Walker & Lee, 2018, pg. 468). The problem with this is that the very growth and success of the IBDP “depends on its acceptance as a suitable qualification for university admission” and schools’ decisions to accept its suitability are based on the IB’s self-promotion (Fitzgerald, 2015, pg. 4). The result is a circular reinforcement of the neoliberal educational paradigm’s need of growth for growth’s sake.

~~The values of the IBDP “resonate with discourses around neoliberalism” as evidenced directly by the fact that families who choose the IBDP for their children “show higher affinity with neoliberal attitudes” (Luke, Shield, & Hincksman, 2012, pg. 329). Key indicators that predict a family’s decision to enroll in the IBDP include family income, parent education, student aspirations, transnational lifestyles, and neoliberal beliefs, with a “statistically significant overrepresentation of ... families in the highest income bracket” (Luke, Shield, & Hincksman, 2012, pg. 329). As IBDP schools have come to effectively compete with public schools in national settings, access has been essentially limited to those with financial means (Outhwaite & Ferri, 2017). Because earning an IB Diploma “accrues exchange value for the individual in terms of institutional access, mobility and employability” graduates receive benefits beyond the education itself, earning *extra value* that effectively represents “capital for mobility in the socially recognized hierarchy” (Luke, Shield, & Hincksman, 2012, pg. 315). As a result of the advantage of being able to access the IBDP, the economic and cultural advantages that allowed these families to access the IBDP will in turn “advantageously bolster their children’s educational chances of maintaining their economic and cultural advantages” (Luke, Shield, & Hincksman, 2012, pg. 329). The increasing difference between the quality of education between a public school and a school offering the IBDP “represents one of the major factors that contribute to reproducing patterns of inequality in the wider society” (Outhwaite & Ferri, 2017, pg. 413). The IBDP in its mission aims to be inclusive, but it is marketed to a targeted audience, subscribed to by a targeted audience, and ultimately benefits a targeted audience. As a result, the IBDP actively reinforces the continuation of the economically advantaged.~~

Beyond solidifying economic inequalities in society, the impact of neoliberalism on the IBDP also shapes what it means to be a person. Neoliberalism has written a *new master narrative* that has come to “define and constrain the whole variety of relationships within and between the state, civil society and the economy” including one’s very view of and relationship with self (Ball, 2000, pg. 17). Education in a neoliberal paradigm can be seen to have value because

of its *instrumental utility* – that is, the value of one’s education results from enhancing the overall value of a person, their overall worth as human capital (Dvir, Shields, & Yemini, 2018). Neoliberalism translates the desire to be well educated into the desire of increasing one’s worth as seen through their economic value. In this sense, education within a neoliberal paradigm translates the development of a person into the development of an economic resource. The valuation of exam-based evidences of quality by the IBDP’s systems of accountability, by IBDP schools, and by universities promoting the value of the IBDP, mean that “students are made aware of the importance of such tests, and become focused on *performing* when required” (Stevenson & Wood, 2013, pg. 51-52). In this sense, IBDP students are explicitly taught that what it means to be a successfully educated person is based upon grades. The overt valuation of exam-based grades as the defining measure of quality of the IBDP “shapes not only how students see themselves, but also how peers, parents, and teachers perceive students” (Jennings & Sohn, 2014, pg. 137). In this sense, what it means to be an *educated* person, morphs into what it means to be a *person*, as fundamentally shaped by neoliberal policies, as brought to life through the IBDP.

The impact of neoliberalism on education is a “rearticulation that addresses the totality of human behaviour” (Kelly, 2006, pg. 23). Its impact on education has led to the *businessification* of teaching and learning as a result of the introduction neoliberal technologies that come to “stand for [and] represent the worth, quality or value of an individual or organization within a field of judgment” (Ball, 2000, pp. 1). That is, the *businessification* of teaching and learning has led to the *businessification* of being. The application of neoliberal measurers of accountability have become so pervasive that the new culture of schools is one that constantly “employs judgments, comparisons and displays as means of control, attrition and change” (Ball, 2000, pp. 1). In such an educational setting, there is no meaningful way for the concept of *subjectification* to emerge. While the neoliberal goal of ensuring the provision of a quality education is well intended, its mechanisms of accountability as seen within the IBDP not only inhibit the realization of a *good education* to be brought to life, but more profoundly fundamentally reshape what it means to be a person, let alone a well-educated person.

E. Fundamental Tensions in Evaluating A Good Education

The wholistic evaluation of the findings brings forth a core theme that runs throughout the thesis, that of the tensions that emerge when evaluating a *good education*. In relation to the process of investigating and engaging in this thesis, one way in which tension was apparent was personal. There was personal, inner tension in regards to the degree to which the data

would show the IBDP as being a good education. While designing a research method it was a challenge not to hope after spending 20 years working with the IBDP that it would be show to be a good education. On many occasions I had promoted the value of the IBDP to students, parents, and colleagues, based upon viewing it as a quality educational experience, in spite of the many anecdotes of how demanding the IBDP was and how it pushed students through high stakes examinations. This thesis put those endorsements formally to the test and proved a source of personal and professional tension.

Beyond the personal, the findings of this thesis brought forth the tensions that exist between policy and practice. The thesis shows that the IBDP, as designed, brings forth all elements of Biesta's *good education*; however, the reality of the IBDP in schools is such that what is valued is what is measured – exam results. In design, in its policy, the IBDP has to aim for the ideals of a quality education and the realization of the IBDP on the ground will necessarily have to strike a compromise from those ideals. This is seen in the broader tensions that exist between policy and practice. The challenge is that as a result of neoliberal reform spreading like a “policy epidemic” (Ball, 2003, pg. 215) new policy has become the “assumptive world of academic educators” and this has “changed what it means to be a teacher” (pg. 217). The tension in the IBDP between its aims and ideals as compared to its reality on the ground is seen in the broader tension between policy and practice under neoliberal reform whereby “a culture and mode of regulation” have come to “represent the worth, quality or value” of a teacher (Ball, 2003, pg. 216). Neoliberal reform has led to teachers questioning what happened to their ability to be creative and to trust their professional judgement, with many leaving the profession as a result of the tension created between desired policy ends and the reality of practice on the ground (Ball, 2003).

The tension that exists between policy goals and practice on the ground is significant to the degree that policy reform “changes one’s social identity” and is viewed on the ground as a “struggle over the teacher’s soul” (Ball, 2003, pg. 217). Tensions arise as a result of the need to compromise, and a finding of this thesis is that this need for compromise must be made explicit. The world of academia critiquing policy reform for not fully realizing abstract ideals does not help, nor does it help to have teachers and administrators lament the good old days where professional judgment was the only measure of accountability needed. At a broad level, the tension between policy and practice emerge as a result of the subjective and objective elements that constitute a good education. Biesta’s model tries to delineate between them, with

the criterion of qualification being objective and subjectification being subjective. However, even within the realm of the more objective measures of a *good education* tension will persist as the question will still be begged, “Who is it that determines what is to count as valuable, effective, or satisfactory performance and what measures or indicators are considered valid?” (Ball, 2003, pg. 216). This framing question illustrates another way in which the tension will persist as it frames a further divide within education that cannot be overcome – that between inputs and outputs. Ball (2003) refers to these tensions creating as a kind of “values schizophrenia” within teachers who are torn between needing to value the objective over the subjective, the output over the input. There exist “tensions between belief and representation” as a result of the measures of accountability imposed by neoliberal reform (Ball, 2003, pg. 223). The IBDP mirrors these same tensions as seen in the divergence between its design and what is practically realized on the ground. These tensions need to be explicitly recognized and accepted in order to allow better solutions to arise, so that we can engage in the much needed discussions of educational philosophy – the ideals of what we should realize – and then be able to practically pull away from the ideals and explicitly and openly accept a compromise on the ground in a way that alleviates the tension.

F. Summary

An holistic evaluation of the findings, drawing upon further research literature, brings forth an argument that suggests a serious limitation in regards to the IBDP’s ability to bring about a meaningful *good education*. As brought to life under a neoliberal backdrop, the IBDP in practice is pushed to serve the same evidences of success valued and promoted under neoliberal educational reform. In doing so, the very ways through which a *good education* could be realized through learning experiences that could bring to life Biesta’s concept of *subjectification* are marginalized, as the key signs and signals of what is valued in IBDP schools point to grades. In this sense, the IBDP Core and Learner Profile are crowded out, seen as add-ons and boxes to tick, leading to what is, in economic terms, a market failure, as seen through the underproduction of *subjectification*. The impact of neoliberalism permeates all elements of society, and the IBDP is no exception. In its inception the IBDP was grounded in moral purpose, *unapologetically idealistic*, designed “to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect” (IB, 2004, pg. v). Unfortunately, while not only having been influenced by neoliberalism, the argument emerging from the findings of this thesis suggest that the IBDP is veering away from its stated framing purpose through explicit

and intentional practices to serve neoliberal ends, as seen through its self-marketing to ensure continued growth by selling itself as the best international education as evidenced by its ability to produce the best prepared graduates who will be most successful in university. The fundamental problem is that the neoliberal methods employed by the IBDP to ensure its growth and success are that which is causing its inability to meet its own stated mission, which is causing its inability to realize a *good education*. Worse, the argument also emerges that the IBDP is perpetuating cultural and economic advantages of the select few who can afford to engage their children in the IBDP, once again running in direct contradiction with its mission.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

A. Overview

Neoliberal educational reform has had profound implications for schools, affecting not only what is taught and how it is taught, but also affecting the philosophical foundation of the teaching and learning process. Resultant changes have affected not only what it means to be an educated person, but they have affected the very type of person schools are charged with shaping. During the same time period that neoliberalism took hold, school curricula grounded in internationalism, as championed by the IBDP, have experienced significant growth globally. International schools operating in market based settings and offering the IBDP seem to have achieved an educational trifecta – meeting the neoliberal desire for accountability, providing education via market-based methods, and providing a quality education; *however, this widely perceived view has not been adequately evaluated in the research literature.*

While the IBDP's own research and marketing suggest that it provides an excellent education, and while this message is echoed by universities and international schools offering the IBDP, as drawn from the IBDP's research and marketing, *there is a significant gap in the research literature evaluating the quality of education realized by the IBDP; further, there is a particularly acute gap in the research literature that evaluates the quality of the IBDP that does not draw upon exam-based metrics of success.* The motivation for this thesis sprung from the research gap, its purpose to evaluate the degree to which market-based international schools offering the IBDP realize a *good education* according to Biesta's criteria of *qualification*, *socialization*, and most importantly, *subjectification*.

B. Summary of Findings

The research design used different research methods in three stages that progressed sequentially through a secondary document analysis, a questionnaire, and interviews in order to collect data for and evaluate five research questions. Findings for the first research question, indicated the IBDP represents a *good education* in its theoretical design.

The second research question evaluated the degree the IBDP provides accountability for the quality of education it provides. This thesis found there to be a high degree of accountability, with the data identifying exam-based evidences as the driving metric for accountability. Findings for the third research question showed the measures of accountability do adversely affect the quality of education because of the over-reliance on exam-based metrics of success,

with findings from **RQ#2** and **RQ#3** fuelling the main argument put forth in the discussion section that outlines how the IBDP effectively represents a market failure in regard to its realisation of *subjectification*.

RQ#4 evaluated the degree the IBDP prepares students well for university academically and socially. The findings showed the IBDP prepares students well academically as a result of its rigour and the measures of accountability. In regard to preparing students socially, the findings showed the IBDP prepares students socially for success in university, but not by programmatic design. Rather, the heavy demands of the programme prepare students socially as a result of making it through the IBDP.

Findings from **RQ#5** showed that the IBDP realises *subjectification* in different ways, by providing opportunities for students to exercise agency, engaging students in disruptive learning experiences, equipping students with critical thinking skills, and providing opportunities to create knowledge. However, while a threshold is met, the overall analysis of the findings, when combined with research literature in regard to the impact of neoliberalism on the IBDP, show that the IBDP does not realise a *good education* in practise, to a meaningful degree. The systems of accountability employed by the IBDP mean that local school context, primarily teacher input, is responsible for the realisation of *subjectification*, rather than an inherent feature of the programme itself.

When investigated holistically, drawing upon further research literature, the argument in the discussion section shows how the impact of neoliberalism on the IBDP's system of accountability fuels the focus on grades as the main metric of success to such a degree that the IBDP's adoption and acceptance of neoliberalism directly inhibits schools' abilities to meaningfully realise a *good education*, as the non-academic measures of success – those that could lead to the realisation of *subjectification* – are crowded out. In essence, the IBDP represents a market failure in regard to its underproduction of *subjectification*, which means it is fundamentally limited in realising its potential.

C. Significance

Evaluating the degree to which the IBDP could build upon the neoliberal goal of providing accountability while providing a quality educational experience was a goal of this thesis. While widely perceived as a quality educational experience, there is a scarcity of research literature

that critically and thoroughly evaluates the IBDP. This gap is accentuated by much of the research about strengths of the IBDP being produced by the IB itself. The gap is further widened because research that does exist typically measures success via exam-based metrics, equating the achievement of high grades in the IBDP, as well as the ability to earn high grades in university as a result of the IBDP, with the educational quality of the IBDP itself. This thesis gains significance through its purpose to raise awareness of the existence of this research gap and address the research gap, deepening the research base by evaluating the level the IBDP realises a *good education*, according to Biesta's criteria.

This thesis gains further significance through its findings. Its conclusion that the IBDP represents a market failure in regard to its ability to provide a *good education* due to the lack of valuation of the IBDP Core and the Learner Profile, points to the need for further research to challenge and build upon these findings. Further, the inherent problem of the IBDP using its own research to promote itself must be addressed – at the very least, those using the research from the IBDP need to be more critical in its evaluation.

Finally, this thesis is of significance in showing the need for policy creators and practitioners to engage in the critical evaluation of expectations of schools. There must be continual questioning and evaluating the quality of education schools are expected to realise. Left unexamined, neoliberal reform led to unplanned and undesirable outcomes. Also, even with clear philosophical purpose and coherence of programmatic design, left critically unexamined, the IBDP defaults to producing the same neoliberal product equating *well-educated* with *performs well on standardised tests*.

D. Limits of the Investigation

1. Researcher Bias

This investigation is limited through the implicit bias of the researcher. My background in economics and my career teaching in international schools offering the IBDP gave rise to the catalyst for the thesis, as seen as a reaction to the ways in which the marketization of education was typically viewed as negative. While aware of the potential internal bias from the outset, throughout the process there remained hope that the IBDP would represent a *good education* according to Biesta's criteria and provide a viable way forward building on the neoliberal paradigm.

Fundamentally, the limitation was one of reflexivity and positionality. As researcher I should have been more methodical throughout the research process to document and reflect on my own position in relation to the overarching question as the investigation progressed. Had this been done, the degree and impact of my bias could have been evaluated better throughout, likely increasing the quality of findings. Had I been more purposeful in overtly reflecting on my position in relation to the thesis, I would have decreased my impact on the research (prospective reflexivity), and I may have also have more profoundly grown through the process (retrospective reflexivity).

Collecting data via the quantitatively based survey helped manage some bias. The secondary document analysis also provided increased objectivity, as the data was produced externally. My implicit bias was noticed more in the interviews, both in regards to asking probing questions, as well as in interpreting the data. It was important not to lead the interviewees and draw out data that I thought would be appropriate in response to the questions. Further, in writing up the findings and the discussion it was a challenge drawing out the significant limitations in regards to the degree to which the IBDP realized a *good education*. In the end, significant limitations of the IBDP were presented, with the conclusion that the IBDP represented a market failure speaking clearly to this, suggesting the implicit bias was overcome.

2. Understanding a Good Education

The findings of this thesis may have been richer if the investigation about what constitutes a quality education was explored in more depth. This thesis was based on Biesta's three criteria of a *good education*, which applied a consistent and appropriate lens. Further investigations into alternative lenses of a quality education could have allowed for the creation of a hybrid model to analyse the quality of education within the IBDP. The impacts of neoliberalism, as well as the origins of economics in education, were significant elements while establishing a base for the investigation. That is why further research about a quality education was not included. In hindsight, the argument that emerged from the discussion section did so because of the additional focus on the impact of economics and neoliberalism on education that served the overall findings well. It is not indicated the quality of the model of a *good education* diminished the overall findings.

3. Research Design

A limitation of the research design is the use of three distinct research methodologies, meaning that no one method was mastered. It could be argued that the sophistication of the methods was not as high had the design relied upon one method. However, the purposes of the five research questions, and the methods employed generated data well, and served the analysis of the data well. Tracing through this limitation leads to an extended limitation that cannot be well-counteracted. Specifically, the application of several research methodologies was a result of the design having five research questions. Looking back, the quantity of research questions made the analysis and argument tenuous. For example, in *RQ#1*, the ways in which a *good education* was investigated, while grounded in Biesta's criteria, drew upon elements from the IBDP authorisation process. In contrast, *RQ#5*, also framed by the lens of Biesta's criteria, looked specifically at the sub-criteria that constituted *subjectification*. While there was overall coherence, the number of research questions make the argument more complicated to follow than if there were fewer research questions that were more coherently evaluated in regard to the aspects used to evaluation quality. This greater coherence could have been achieved in the initial design of the elements of the IBDP that were investigated to determine programme quality.

E. Implications

1. Value the IBDP Core & Learner Profile in School

As a result of the findings of the thesis, In my professional role, I will take concrete action to formally signal the importance of the IBDP Core and the Learner Profile across stakeholder groups – students, faculty, administration, parents, and the Board. A first step will be to raise the awareness of the importance of the IBDP Core. Beyond raising awareness, another key way forward will be to examine the signals that the school sends to students, explicitly and implicitly, in regards to what is valued. To what degree as a school are we valuing academic success through our actions as compared to dispositional success? We have, for example, and academic Honor Roll, but we do not have an Honor Roll for the Learner Profile. The Board promotes the IBDP exam scores through the High School Profile, but does not promote our CAS Program. Most importantly, the school needs to be formally engaged in ongoing questions of the quality of education we would like to bring to life, and evaluate the degree to which there is alignment with what we are currently realizing via our IBDP and what is desired.

2. There Needs to be A Paradigm Shift

Findings of this thesis also imply there needs to be a paradigm shift within the IBDP and its systems of accountability. Finding ways for the IBDP to truly realise its purpose as stated in its guiding documents will not happen through a mere refinement of its current practises. The IBDP is well-grounded in neoliberalism, from its measures of accountability to its strategies of marketing to ensure growth.

While the findings of the thesis do not show that international schools providing their service in a free market cannot work, the impact of neoliberalism on the IBDP must be fundamentally addressed. For this to happen, discussions about what philosophically constitutes a *good education* need to explore and expand educational benefits. Findings of this thesis show that a *good education* is subjective, values-based, and a function of local context. A *good education* is a normative issue, in terms of its initial framing, as well as in its realisation. Schools and policy makers must overtly recognise this and explicitly grapple with the questions: *What should the good education we want to bring to life look like? How will we know if we have been successful?* For this to happen, universities will have to evaluate and adjust their processes of application. As long as exam-based evidences of success are demanded as proof of worthiness of admission, schools will continue serving this end.

F. Suggestions for Further Research

Findings of this thesis point to the need for further research about the IBDP, as there is a broad gap in the literature. Specifically, the findings from *RQ#1* show clear potential in the design of the IBDP to bring to life a quality educational experience, one that would go well beyond the neoliberal reform. However, the system of accountability employed by the IBDP to ensure its quality has an excessive focus on exam-based evidences of success, which leads to an underproduction of *subjectification*. In order for the IBDP to correct this market failure and realise its potential, further research needs to be conducted to examine its model of accountability related to *subjectification* and the potential of a *good education*. Further research also needs to be done to explore ways the grounding purposes and values of the IBDP impact its system of accountability. Further research about how non-profit organizations use values-driven measures of accountability in market-based models of provision are suggested. Research literature on values-driven measures of accountability shows it is possible to “meet substantial standards of accountability and performance...[and] also ensure the building of social capital” (Harman, 2009, p. 387).

In the case of the IBDP, its core values as seen in its mission statement and amplified through the IBDP Core and the Learner Profile must be valued through the systems of accountability. One way to do this would be to connect research drawn from non-profit organizations (NPOs). NPOs emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, which is notable for being the same time that neoliberal economic reform evolved. Each approach was “a response to government failure to respond to the demand for public goods” (Smith, 2012, p. 31). While neoliberal economic reform looked to the privatised markets for the provision of goods, NPOs “stepped in to fill what the government didn’t provide well,” and did so in a model that mirrored governmental provision of public goods (Ibid, p. 31).

Accountability systems in NPOs evolved to be more complex because they have to serve “a socially-oriented and ethically-based mission” (Costa, Ramus, & Andreus, 2011, p. 470). It is a challenge to frame a system of accountability around an NPO’s mission because it “consists in producing social value, which is a vague and broad concept that impacts differently on various stakeholders who themselves are or should be able to influence its definition and evaluation” (Ibid, p. 474). NPOs also need to ensure financial viability, keeping in mind that “financial sustainability does not guarantee the achievement of the organizational mission, nor vice versa” (Ibid, pg. 470). This dual track of accountability mirrors the challenge of market-based international schools offering the IBDP, as they must remain financially viable based upon student fees, and they must meet their organizational missions, shaped fundamentally by the IBDP.

The IBDP could implement such a system of accountability, particularly focusing on how best to weave its Core component into the fold of *value creation*. The criteria of a *good education* as used in this thesis, for example, could be used to frame that leg of the values-driven accountability system, or a non-IBDP school could generate its own criteria that would be served. Like an NPO, a school must also operate in a financially responsible manner, ensuring efficient allocation of resources, this a driving force of neoliberal educational reform, and it must serve the goal of *organizational survival*, meaning traditional measures of accountability like exam scores and university acceptance rates must be retained; however, findings from this thesis show that even a school grounded in the values of the IBDP may lose sight of its mission and focus on objective, quantifiable short-term metrics of educational success, such as IBDP exam grades. The research from value-based systems of accountability can help maintain a

multifaceted approach, and can help ensure, in particular, that the IBDP Core remains just that – at the core of teaching and learning.

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Appendix 1 – Questionnaire

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

1. Questionnaire Overview

Thank you for taking the time to share your experiences working with the IB Diploma Program (IBDP).

Please know that it will take approximately 8-10 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

The data collected in this questionnaire will be used in a Doctoral dissertation through the University of Bath; the goal is to analyze the extent to which the IBDP as taught in international schools represents a *good education*.

**All data will be depersonalized and decontextualized to ensure that participants' responses are anonymous.*

**The data collected will be shared as part of the final dissertation, which will be made public through the University of Bath's library.*

**Completion of the questionnaire represents a participant's consent.*

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

2. Preliminary Information

This section of the questionnaire collects data to contextualize the results. Individual information that would identify a given participant and/or school will not be shared.

* 1. In which country is the school you are currently working in located?

* 2. For how many years have you been teaching internationally?

- ☐ 0 to 5 years
- ☐ 6 to 10 years
- ☐ more than 10 years

* 3. For how many years have you been teaching the IBDP?

- ☐ 0 to 5 years
- ☐ 6 to 10 years
- ☐ more than 10 years

* 4. For how many years has your current school offered the IBDP?

- ☐ 0 to 5 years
- ☐ 6 to 10 years
- ☐ 11 to 15 years
- ☐ more than 15 years

* 5. How many students are in the IBDP at your school (Year 1 and Year 2 combined)?

- ☐ 0 to 40
- ☐ 41 to 80
- ☐ 81 to 120
- ☐ 121 to 160
- ☐ 161 to 200
- ☐ 200+

* 6. Is your school a non-profit organization?

☐ Yes

☐ No

* 7. Do student fees essentially cover all of your school's operational costs?

☐ Yes

☐ No

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

3. The extent to which the IBDP provides quality assurance and accountability

Over the past 30 years educational systems have increasingly implemented market-based methods of quality assurance to hold schools accountable for teaching and learning.

This section collects data to determine the degree to which stakeholders can make evidence-informed judgements of the quality of teaching and learning in the IBDP at international schools.

* 8. What evidence is used / shared by your school to give assurances of the quality of teaching and learning in the IBDP to parents, teachers, and the administration? **Please select all that apply:**

- ☐ Accuracy of predicted grades
- ☐ Alumni survey results
- ☐ Core points awarded
- ☐ Demonstration of IB Learner Profile dispositions
- ☐ Extended Essay results
- ☐ Overall IBDP exam results
- ☐ Overall IBDP exam results as compared to world averages
- ☐ Parent climate survey results
- ☐ Percentage of IBDP students involved in extra-curricular athletics and activities
- ☐ Percentage of IBDP students taking an Art as their Group VI Subject
- ☐ Quality of CAS experiences
- ☐ Scholarship funding awarded
- ☐ Student climate survey results
- ☐ Students' pass rates for earning the IB Diploma
- ☐ Students' pass rates for earning the IB Diploma compared to world averages
- ☐ Subject specific IBDP exam results
- ☐ Subject specific IBDP exam results compared to world averages
- ☐ Theory of Knowledge results
- ☐ University acceptances
- ☐ Other (please specify all other evidence shared):

9. Please rank the **top four** criteria you think **parents** use to determine the quality of the IBDP at your school (#1=most important, #2=2nd most important, ...).

Criteria **parents** use to determine quality of the IBDP

#1	<input type="text"/>
#2	<input type="text"/>
#3	<input type="text"/>
#4	<input type="text"/>

10. Please rank the **top four** criteria you think **teachers** use to determine the quality of the IBDP at your school (#1=most important, #2=2nd most important, ...).

Criteria **teachers** use to determine quality of the IBDP

#1	<input type="text"/>
#2	<input type="text"/>
#3	<input type="text"/>
#4	<input type="text"/>

11. Please rank the **top four** criteria you think the **administration** uses to determine the quality of the IBDP at your school (#1=most important, #2=2nd most important, ...).

Criteria the **administration** uses to determine quality of the IBDP

#1	<input type="text"/>
#2	<input type="text"/>
#3	<input type="text"/>
#4	<input type="text"/>

* 12. In making judgements of the quality of teaching and learning in the IBDP at your school, sources of evidence are **readily available** to:

	Strong Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 13. In making judgements of the quality of teaching and learning in the IBDP at your school, an **appropriate variety** of sources of evidence are available to:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 14. In making judgements of the quality of teaching and learning in the IBDP at your school an appropriate variety sources of evidence are **accessed and used** by:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 15. Overall, across stakeholders in my school there are a variety of appropriate sources of evidence to make sound judgments of the quality of teaching and learning in the IBDP.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments (as appropriate):

* 16. I feel I am appropriately held accountable for the quality of teaching and learning in my IBDP classes by:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strong Agree
Parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments (as appropriate):

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

4. The extent to which accountability-based educational reform has affected the IBDP.

Educational reform aimed at holding schools accountable has led to changes in the purposes and nature of teaching and learning. This section of the questionnaire will generate data to analyze the extent to which the implementation of accountability measures in national systems have affected teaching and learning in the IBDP in international schools.

* 17. IBDP final exam grades are used as the main indicator of the *quality of your school* by:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 18. IBDP final exam grades are used in your school as the main indicator of the *quality of a student's learning* by:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 19. IBDP final exam grades are used in your school as the main indicator of *teacher quality* by:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 20. I feel limited in my ability to be experimental / innovative in the classroom because of pressures to prepare students for the IBDP final exams.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 21. I feel limited in my ability to know and connect with my students as individuals because of pressures to prepare students for the IBDP final exams.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 22. I feel limited in my ability to adapt my teaching to the individual learning needs of my students because of pressures to prepare students for the IBDP final exams.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 23. The IBDP promotes competition between students in:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
my classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
the school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 24. The acquisition of the Learner Profile dispositions is an integral part of teaching and learning in:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
my classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
the school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 25. The acquisition of the Learner Profile dispositions is an integral part of students' experiences in the IBDP Core (ToK, CAS, and the Extended Essay) at my school.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 26. The acquisition of the Learner Profile dispositions is valued in the teaching and learning process at my school by:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 27. The IBDP prepares students well with key knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for academic success in university.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments (as applicable):

* 28. The IBDP prepares students well with key knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for successful social integration in university.

Strongly Disagree

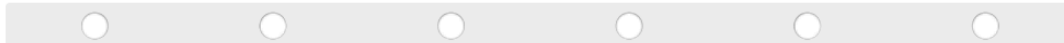
Disagree

Somewhat Disagree

Somewhat Agree

Agree

Strongly Agree



Comments (as applicable):



29. If you are willing to participate in a 45-minute interview to determine the extent to which the IB Diploma Program represents a *Good Education*, please enter your email address below:



Appendix 2 – Summary Data from Questionnaire

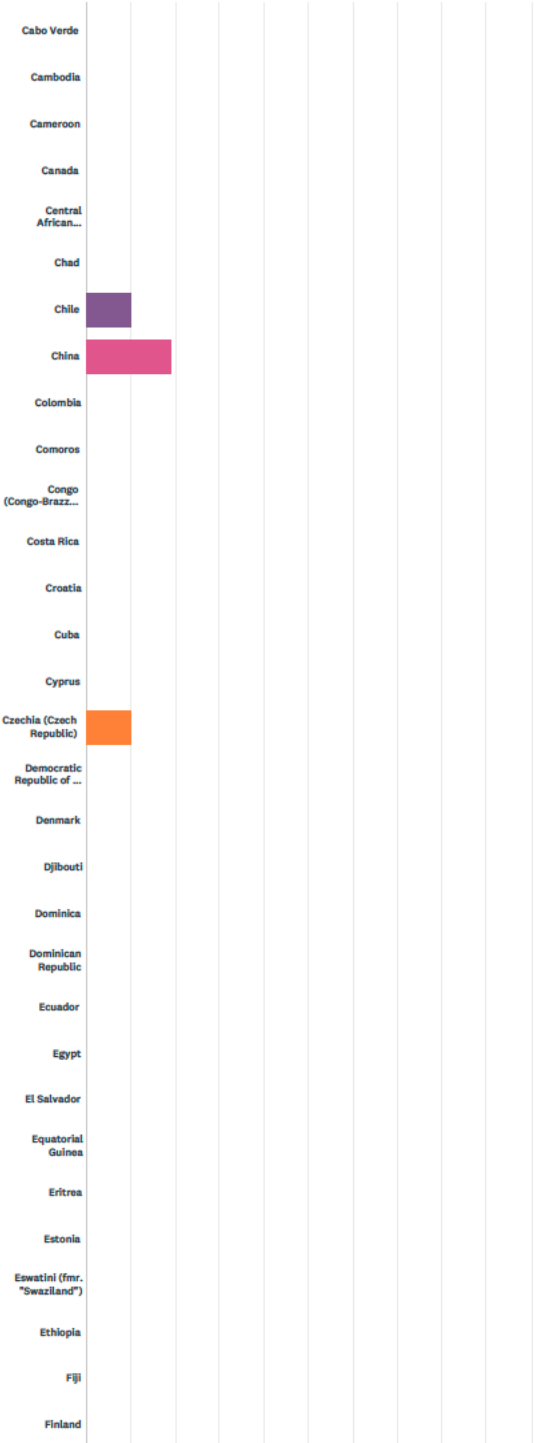
Q1 In which country is the school you are currently working in located?

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



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The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey



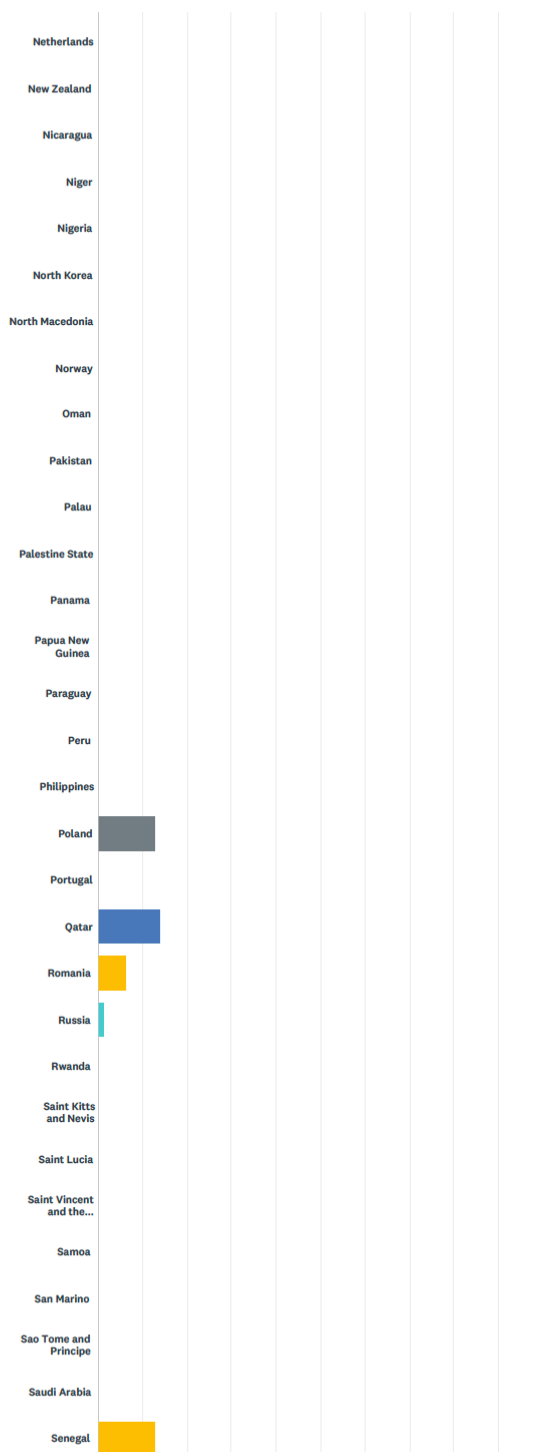
The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

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The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

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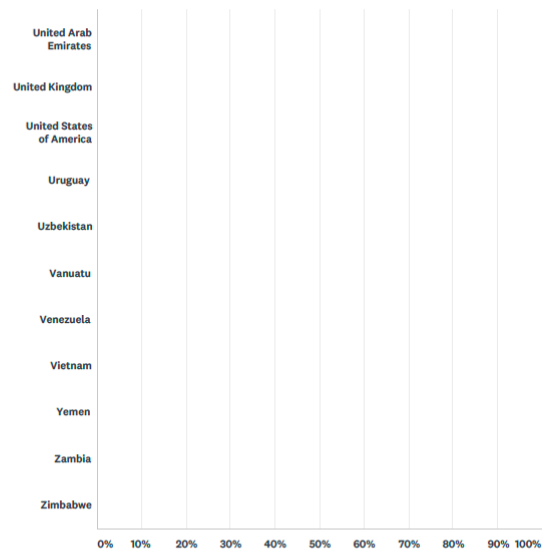


5 / 40

Screenshot

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Afghanistan	0.00%	0
Albania	0.00%	0
Algeria	0.00%	0
Andorra	0.00%	0
Angola	0.00%	0
Antigua and Barbuda	0.00%	0
Argentina	0.00%	0
Armenia	0.00%	0
Australia	0.00%	0
Austria	0.00%	0
Azerbaijan	0.00%	0
Bahamas	0.00%	0
Bahrain	0.00%	0
Bangladesh	3.80%	3
Barbados	0.00%	0
Belarus	0.00%	0
Belgium	0.00%	0
Belize	0.00%	0
Benin	0.00%	0
Bhutan	0.00%	0
Bolivia	0.00%	0
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.00%	0
Botswana	0.00%	0
Brazil	0.00%	0
Brunei	0.00%	0
Bulgaria	0.00%	0
Burkina Faso	0.00%	0
Burundi	0.00%	0
Côte d'Ivoire	0.00%	0
Cabo Verde	0.00%	0

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Cambodia	0.00%	0
Cameroon	0.00%	0
Canada	0.00%	0
Central African Republic	0.00%	0
Chad	0.00%	0
Chile	10.13%	8
China	18.99%	15
Colombia	0.00%	0
Comoros	0.00%	0
Congo (Congo-Brazzaville)	0.00%	0
Costa Rica	0.00%	0
Croatia	0.00%	0
Cuba	0.00%	0
Cyprus	0.00%	0
Czechia (Czech Republic)	10.13%	8
Democratic Republic of the Congo	0.00%	0
Denmark	0.00%	0
Djibouti	0.00%	0
Dominica	0.00%	0
Dominican Republic	0.00%	0
Ecuador	0.00%	0
Egypt	0.00%	0
El Salvador	0.00%	0
Equatorial Guinea	0.00%	0
Eritrea	0.00%	0
Estonia	0.00%	0
Eswatini (fmr. "Swaziland")	0.00%	0
Ethiopia	0.00%	0
Fiji	0.00%	0
Finland	0.00%	0
France	0.00%	0
Gabon	0.00%	0
Gambia	0.00%	0
Georgia	0.00%	0
Germany	0.00%	0
Ghana	0.00%	0
Greece	0.00%	0
Grenada	0.00%	0
Guatemala	0.00%	0
Guinea	0.00%	0
Guinea-Bissau	0.00%	0
Guyana	0.00%	0
Haiti	0.00%	0
Holy See	0.00%	0
Honduras	0.00%	0
Hungary	3.80%	3
Iceland	0.00%	0
India	0.00%	0
Indonesia	0.00%	0
Iran	0.00%	0
Iraq	0.00%	0
Ireland	0.00%	0

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Israel	0.00%	0
Italy	0.00%	0
Jamaica	0.00%	0
Japan	0.00%	0
Jordan	0.00%	0
Kazakhstan	0.00%	0
Kenya	0.00%	0
Kiribati	0.00%	0
Kuwait	0.00%	0
Kyrgyzstan	0.00%	0
Laos	0.00%	0
Latvia	0.00%	0
Lebanon	0.00%	0
Lesotho	0.00%	0
Liberia	0.00%	0
Libya	0.00%	0
Liechtenstein	0.00%	0
Lithuania	0.00%	0
Luxembourg	0.00%	0
Madagascar	0.00%	0
Malawi	0.00%	0
Malaysia	5.06%	4
Maldives	0.00%	0
Mali	0.00%	0
Malta	0.00%	0
Marshall Islands	0.00%	0
Mauritania	0.00%	0
Mauritius	0.00%	0
Mexico	0.00%	0
Micronesia	0.00%	0
Moldova	0.00%	0
Monaco	0.00%	0
Mongolia	0.00%	0
Montenegro	0.00%	0
Morocco	0.00%	0
Mozambique	0.00%	0
Myanmar (formerly Burma)	0.00%	0
Namibia	0.00%	0
Nauru	0.00%	0
Nepal	0.00%	0
Netherlands	0.00%	0
New Zealand	0.00%	0
Nicaragua	0.00%	0
Niger	0.00%	0
Nigeria	0.00%	0
North Korea	0.00%	0
North Macedonia	0.00%	0
Norway	0.00%	0
Oman	0.00%	0
Pakistan	0.00%	0
Palau	0.00%	0
Palestine State	0.00%	0

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Panama	0.00%	0
Papua New Guinea	0.00%	0
Paraguay	0.00%	0
Peru	0.00%	0
Philippines	0.00%	0
Poland	12.66%	10
Portugal	0.00%	0
Qatar	13.92%	11
Romania	6.33%	5
Russia	1.27%	1
Rwanda	0.00%	0
Saint Kitts and Nevis	0.00%	0
Saint Lucia	0.00%	0
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0.00%	0
Samoa	0.00%	0
San Marino	0.00%	0
Sao Tome and Principe	0.00%	0
Saudi Arabia	0.00%	0
Senegal	12.66%	10
Serbia	0.00%	0
Seychelles	0.00%	0
Sierra Leone	0.00%	0
Singapore	0.00%	0
Slovakia	0.00%	0
Slovenia	0.00%	0
Solomon Islands	0.00%	0
Somalia	0.00%	0
South Africa	0.00%	0
South Korea	0.00%	0
South Sudan	0.00%	0
Spain	0.00%	0
Sri Lanka	0.00%	0
Sudan	0.00%	0
Suriname	0.00%	0
Sweden	0.00%	0
Switzerland	0.00%	0
Syria	0.00%	0
Tajikistan	0.00%	0
Tanzania	0.00%	0
Thailand	1.27%	1
Timor-Leste	0.00%	0
Togo	0.00%	0
Tonga	0.00%	0
Trinidad and Tobago	0.00%	0
Tunisia	0.00%	0
Turkey	0.00%	0
Turkmenistan	0.00%	0
Tuvalu	0.00%	0
Uganda	0.00%	0
Ukraine	0.00%	0
United Arab Emirates	0.00%	0
United Kingdom	0.00%	0

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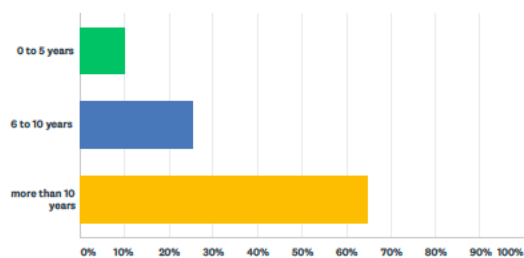
United States of America	0.00%	0
Uruguay	0.00%	0
Uzbekistan	0.00%	0
Vanuatu	0.00%	0
Venezuela	0.00%	0
Vietnam	0.00%	0
Yemen	0.00%	0
Zambia	0.00%	0
Zimbabwe	0.00%	0
TOTAL		79

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q2 For how many years have you been teaching internationally?

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



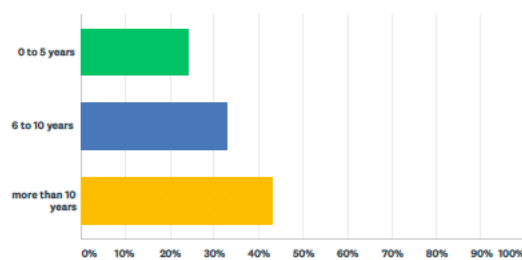
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0 to 5 years	10.13%	8
6 to 10 years	25.32%	20
more than 10 years	64.56%	51
TOTAL		79

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q3 For how many years have you been teaching the IBDP?

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0

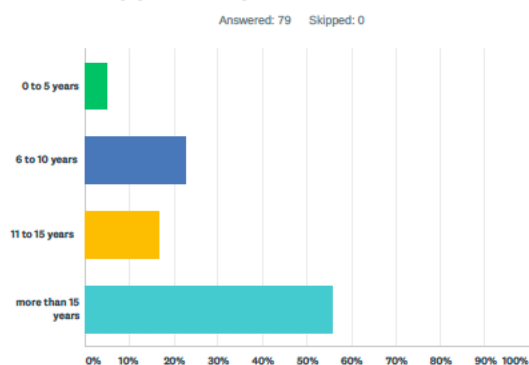


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0 to 5 years	24.05%	19
6 to 10 years	32.91%	26
more than 10 years	43.04%	34
TOTAL		79

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q4 For how many years has your current school offered the IBDP?



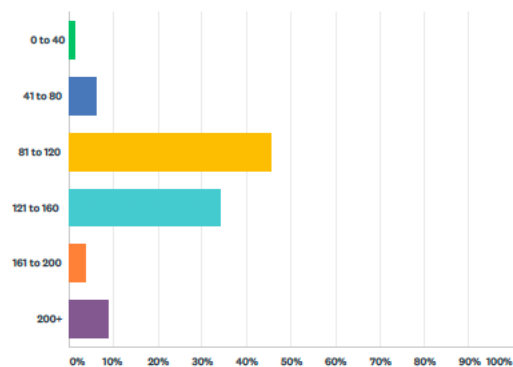
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
0 to 5 years	5.06%4
6 to 10 years	22.78%18
11 to 15 years	16.46%13
more than 15 years	55.70%44
TOTAL	79

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q5 How many students are in the IBDP at your school (Year 1 and Year 2 combined)?

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



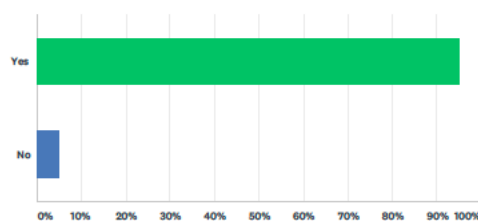
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
0 to 40	1.27% 1
41 to 80	6.33% 5
81 to 120	45.57% 36
121 to 160	34.18% 27
161 to 200	3.80% 3
200+	8.86% 7
TOTAL	79

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q6 Is your school a non-profit organization?

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



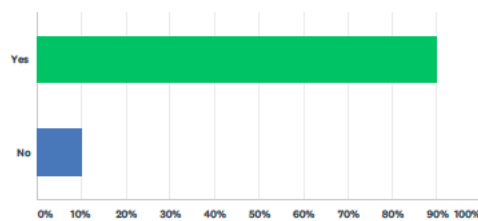
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	94.94%	75
No	5.06%	4
TOTAL		79

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q7 Do student fees essentially cover all of your school's operational costs?

Answered: 79 Skipped: 0



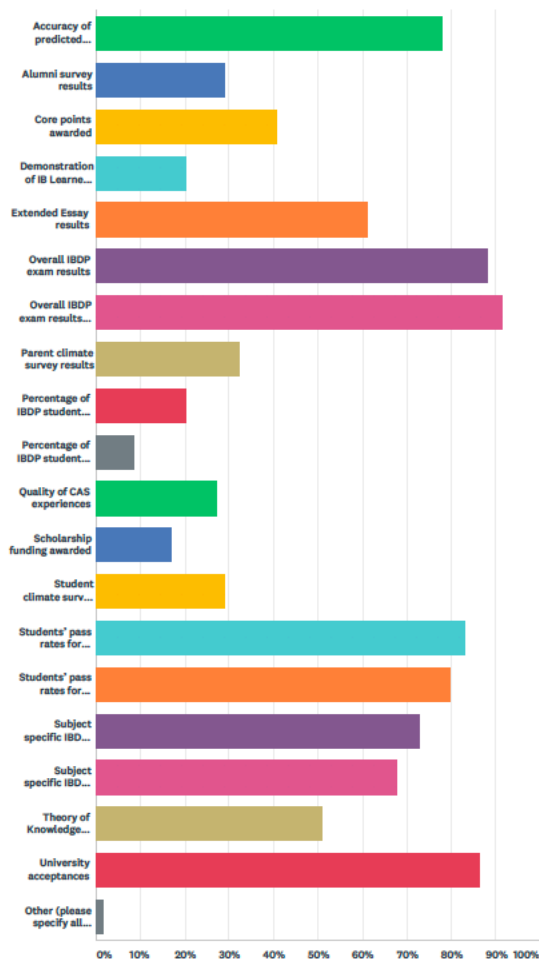
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	89.87% 71
No	10.13% 8
TOTAL	79

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q8 What evidence is used / shared by your school to give assurances of the quality of teaching and learning in the IBDP to parents, teachers, and the administration? Please select all that apply:

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



ANSWER CHOICES	PERCENTAGE	RESPONSES
Accuracy of predicted grades	77.97%	46
Alumni survey results	28.81%	17
Core points awarded	40.68%	24
Demonstration of IB Learner Profile dispositions	20.34%	12
Extended Essay results	61.02%	36
Overall IBDP exam results	88.14%	52
Overall IBDP exam results as compared to world averages	91.53%	54
Parent climate survey results	32.20%	19
Percentage of IBDP students involved in extra-curricular athletics and activities	20.34%	12
Percentage of IBDP students taking an Art as their Group VI Subject	8.47%	5

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

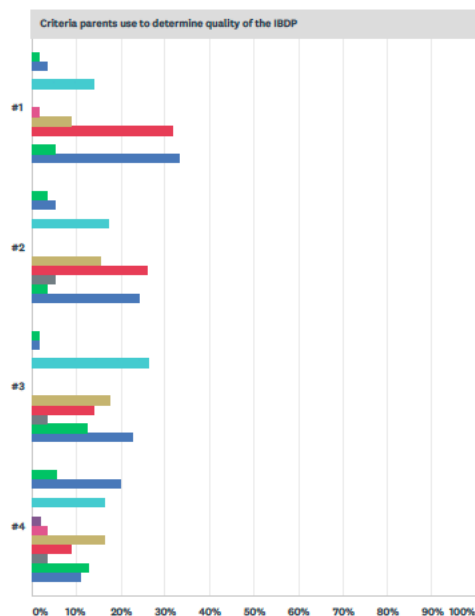
Quality of CAS experiences	27.12%	16
Scholarship funding awarded	16.95%	10
Student climate survey results	28.81%	17
Students' pass rates for earning the IB Diploma	83.05%	49
Students' pass rates for earning the IB Diploma compared to world averages	79.66%	47
Subject specific IBDP exam results	72.88%	43
Subject specific IBDP exam results compared to world averages	67.80%	40
Theory of Knowledge results	50.85%	30
University acceptances	86.44%	51
Other (please specify all other evidence shared):	1.69%	1
Total Respondents: 59		

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q9 Please rank the top four criteria you think parents use to determine the quality of the IBDP at your school (#1=most important, #2=2nd most important, ...).

Answered: 58 Skipped: 21



- School-climate survey results from parents, students, and alumni
- Teachers' accuracy in predicting students' IBDP exam results
- Students' personal engagement in the Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge
- Subject-specific IBDP exam results
- Depth of students' learning experiences in the CAS Program
- Students' acquisition of IB Learner Profile dispositions
- IBDP Core points for ToK and the Extended Essay
- Students pass rates for earning the IB Diploma
- IBDP exam results and pass rates compared to world averages
- Percentage of students enrolled in full IB Diploma Program
- Parents' informal feedback to teachers, other parents, and/or the administration
- University acceptances

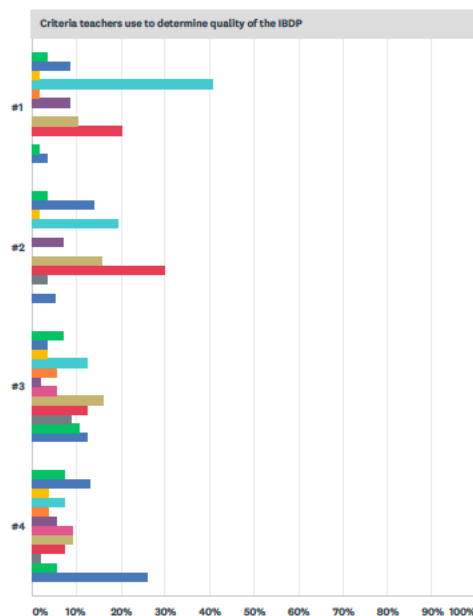
	-SCHOOL-CLIMATE SURVEY RESULTS FROM PARENTS, STUDENTS, AND ALUMNI	-TEACHERS' ACCURACY IN PREDICTING STUDENTS' IBDP EXAM RESULTS	-STUDENTS' PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE EXTENDED ESSAY AND THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE	-SUBJECT-SPECIFIC IBDP EXAM RESULTS	-DEPTH OF STUDENTS' LEARNING EXPERIENCES IN THE CAS PROGRAM	-STUDENTS' ACQUISITION OF IB LEARNER PROFILE DISPOSITIONS	-IBDP CORE POINTS FOR TOK AND THE EXTENDED ESSAY	-STUDENTS PASS RATES FOR EARNING THE IB DIPLOMA	-IBDP EXAM RESULTS AND PASS RATES COMPARED TO WORLD AVERAGES	-PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN FULL IB DIPLOMA PROGRAM
#1	1.75% 1	3.51% 2	0.00% 0	14.04% 8	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	1.75% 1	8.77% 5	31.58% 18	0.00% 0
#2	3.45% 2	5.17% 3	0.00% 0	17.24% 10	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	15.52% 9	25.86% 15	5.17% 3
#3	1.75% 1	1.75% 1	0.00% 0	26.32% 15	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	17.54% 10	14.04% 8	3.51% 2
#4	5.45% 3	20.00% 11	0.00% 0	16.36% 9	0.00% 0	1.82% 1	3.64% 2	16.36% 9	9.09% 5	3.64% 2

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q10 Please rank the top four criteria you think teachers use to determine the quality of the IBDP at your school (#1=most important, #2=2nd most important, ...).

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



- School-climate survey results from parents, students, and alumni
- Teachers' accuracy in predicting students' IBDP exam results
- Students' personal engagement in the Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge
- Subject-specific IBDP exam results
- Depth of students' learning experiences in the CAS Program
- Students' acquisition of IB Learner Profile dispositions
- IBDP Core points for TOK and the Extended Essay
- Students pass rates for earning the IB Diploma
- IBDP exam results and pass rates compared to world averages
- Percentage of students enrolled in full IB Diploma Program
- Parents' informal feedback to teachers, other parents, and/or the administration
- University acceptances

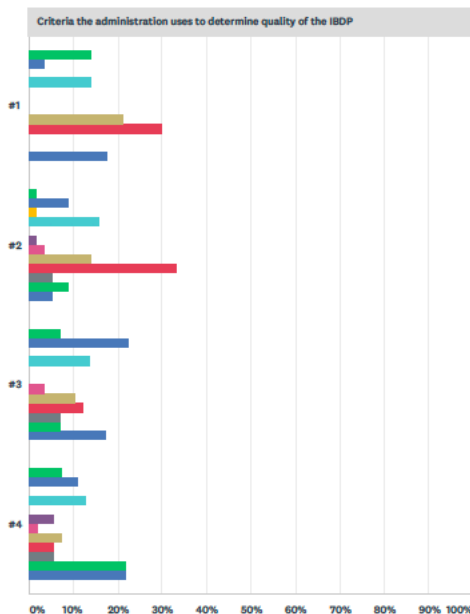
Criteria teachers use to determine quality of the IBDP	-SCHOOL-CLIMATE SURVEY RESULTS FROM PARENTS, STUDENTS, AND ALUMNI	-TEACHERS' ACCURACY IN PREDICTING STUDENTS' IBDP EXAM RESULTS	-STUDENTS' PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE EXTENDED ESSAY AND THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE	-SUBJECT-SPECIFIC IBDP EXAM RESULTS	-DEPTH OF STUDENTS' LEARNING EXPERIENCES IN THE CAS PROGRAM	-STUDENTS' ACQUISITION OF IB LEARNER PROFILE DISPOSITIONS	-IBDP CORE POINTS FOR TOK AND THE EXTENDED ESSAY	-STUDENTS PASS RATES FOR EARNING THE IB DIPLOMA	-IBDP EXAM RESULTS AND PASS RATES COMPARED TO WORLD AVERAGES	-PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN FULL IB DIPLOMA PROGRAM
#1	3.39% 2	8.47% 5	1.69% 1	40.68% 24	1.69% 1	8.47% 5	0.00% 0	10.17% 6	20.34% 12	0.00% 0
#2	3.51% 2	14.04% 8	1.75% 1	19.30% 11	0.00% 0	7.02% 4	0.00% 0	15.79% 9	29.82% 17	3.51% 2
#3	7.14% 4	3.57% 2	3.57% 2	12.50% 7	5.36% 3	1.79% 1	5.36% 3	16.07% 9	12.50% 7	8.93% 5
#4	7.41% 4	12.96% 7	3.70% 2	7.41% 4	3.70% 2	5.56% 3	9.26% 5	9.26% 5	7.41% 4	1.85% 1

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q11 Please rank the top four criteria you think the administration uses to determine the quality of the IBDP at your school (#1=most important, #2=2nd most important, ...).

Answered: 58 Skipped: 21



- School-climate survey results from parents, students, and alumni
- Teachers' accuracy in predicting students' IBDP exam results
- Students' personal engagement in the Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge
- Subject-specific IBDP exam results
- Depth of students' learning experiences in the CAS Program
- Students' acquisition of IB Learner Profile dispositions
- IBDP Core points for ToK and the Extended Essay
- Students' pass rates for earning the IB Diploma
- IBDP exam results and pass rates compared to world averages
- Percentage of students enrolled in full IB Diploma Program
- Parents' informal feedback to teachers, other parents, and/or the administration
- University acceptances

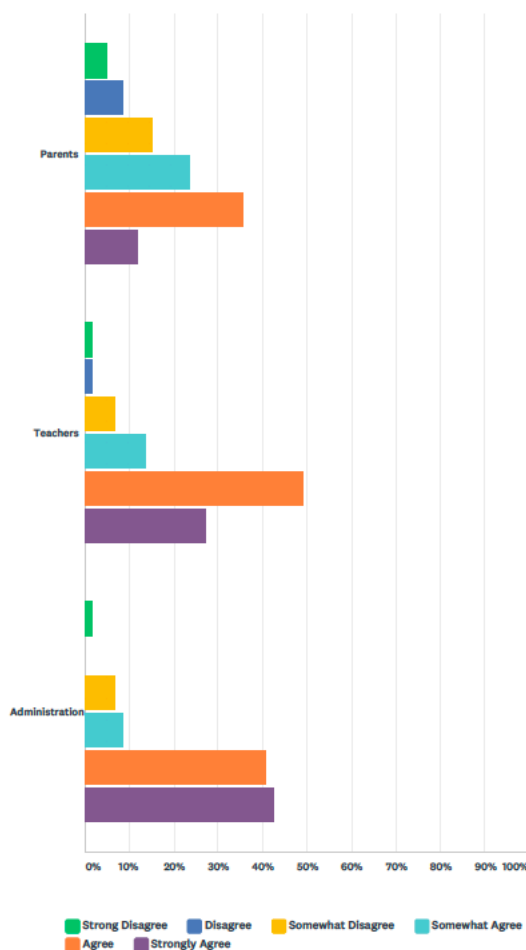
	-SCHOOL-CLIMATE SURVEY RESULTS FROM PARENTS, STUDENTS, AND ALUMNI	-TEACHERS' ACCURACY IN PREDICTING STUDENTS' IBDP EXAM RESULTS	-STUDENTS' PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE EXTENDED ESSAY AND THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE	-SUBJECT-SPECIFIC IBDP EXAM RESULTS	-DEPTH OF STUDENTS' LEARNING EXPERIENCES IN THE CAS PROGRAM	-STUDENTS' ACQUISITION OF IB LEARNER PROFILE DISPOSITIONS	-IBDP CORE POINTS FOR TOK AND THE EXTENDED ESSAY	-STUDENTS' PASS RATES FOR EARNING THE IB DIPLOMA	-IBDP EXAM RESULTS AND PASS RATES COMPARED TO WORLD AVERAGES	-PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN FULL IB DIPLOMA PROGRAM
#1	14.04% 8	3.51% 2	0.00% 0	14.04% 8	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	21.05% 12	29.82% 17	0.00% 0
#2	1.75% 1	8.77% 5	1.75% 1	15.79% 9	0.00% 0	1.75% 1	3.51% 2	14.04% 8	33.33% 19	5.26% 3
#3	6.90% 4	22.41% 13	0.00% 0	13.79% 8	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	3.45% 2	10.34% 6	12.07% 7	6.90% 4
#4	7.27% 4	10.91% 6	0.00% 0	12.73% 7	0.00% 0	5.45% 3	1.82% 1	7.27% 4	5.45% 3	5.45% 3

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q12 In making judgements of the quality of teaching and learning in the IBDP at your school, sources of evidence are readily available to:

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



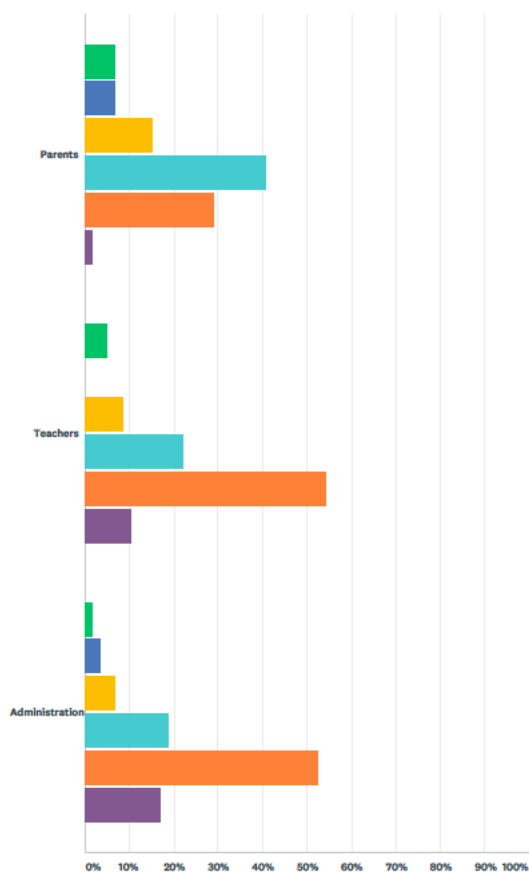
	STRONG DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Parents	5.08% 3	8.47% 5	15.25% 9	23.73% 14	35.59% 21	11.86% 7	59	4.12
Teachers	1.69% 1	1.69% 1	6.78% 4	13.56% 8	49.15% 29	27.12% 16	59	4.88
Administration	1.69% 1	0.00% 0	6.78% 4	8.47% 5	40.68% 24	42.37% 25	59	5.14

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q13 In making judgements of the quality of teaching and learning in the IBDP at your school, an appropriate variety of sources of evidence are available to:

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



Strongly Disagree Disagree Somewhat Disagree
Somewhat Agree Agree Strongly Agree

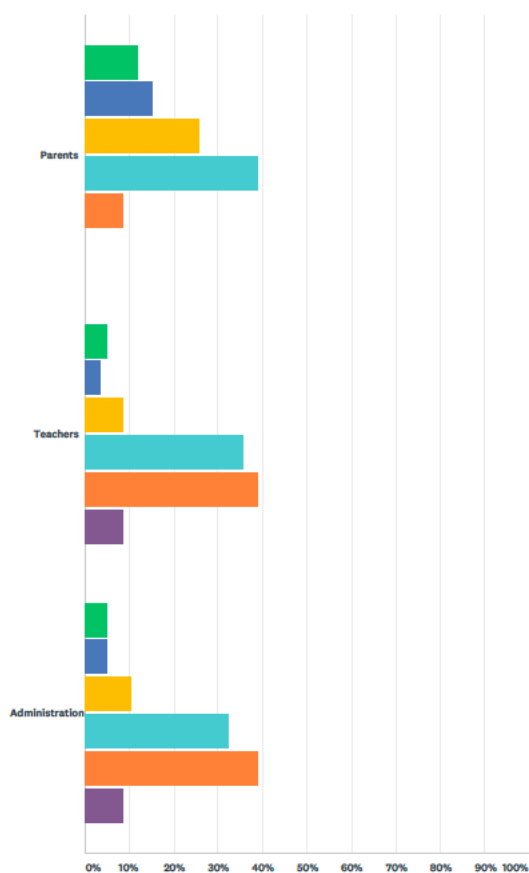
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Parents	6.78% 4	6.78% 4	15.25% 9	40.68% 24	28.81% 17	1.69% 1	59	3.83
Teachers	5.08% 3	0.00% 0	8.47% 5	22.03% 13	54.24% 32	10.17% 6	59	4.51
Administration	1.69% 1	3.39% 2	6.78% 4	18.64% 11	52.54% 31	16.95% 10	59	4.68

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q14 In making judgements of the quality of teaching and learning in the IBDP at your school an appropriate variety sources of evidence are accessed and used by:

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



Strongly Disagree Disagree Somewhat Disagree
Somewhat Agree Agree Strongly Agree

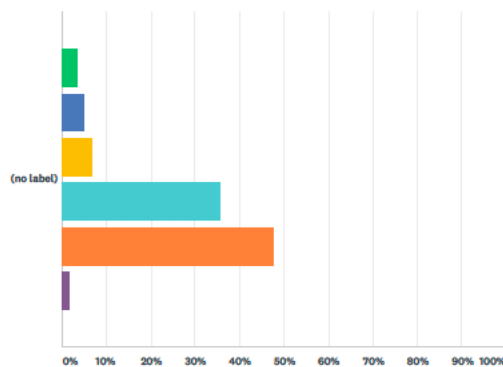
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Parents	11.86% 7	15.25% 9	25.42% 15	38.98% 23	8.47% 5	0.00% 0	59	3.17
Teachers	5.08% 3	3.39% 2	8.47% 5	35.59% 21	38.98% 23	8.47% 5	59	4.25
Administration	5.08% 3	5.08% 3	10.17% 6	32.20% 19	38.98% 23	8.47% 5	59	4.20

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q15 Overall, across stakeholders in my school there are a variety of appropriate sources of evidence to make sound judgments of the quality of teaching and learning in the IBDP.

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



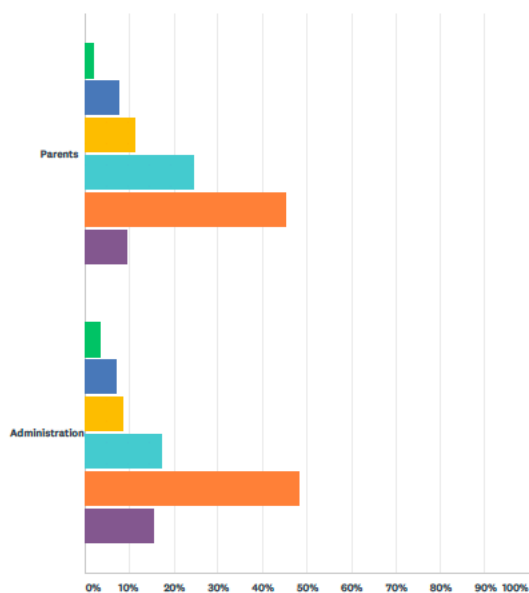
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	3.39%	5.08%	6.78%	35.59%	47.46%	1.69%	59	4.24
	2	3	4	21	28	1		

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q16 I feel I am appropriately held accountable for the quality of teaching and learning in my IBDP classes by:

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



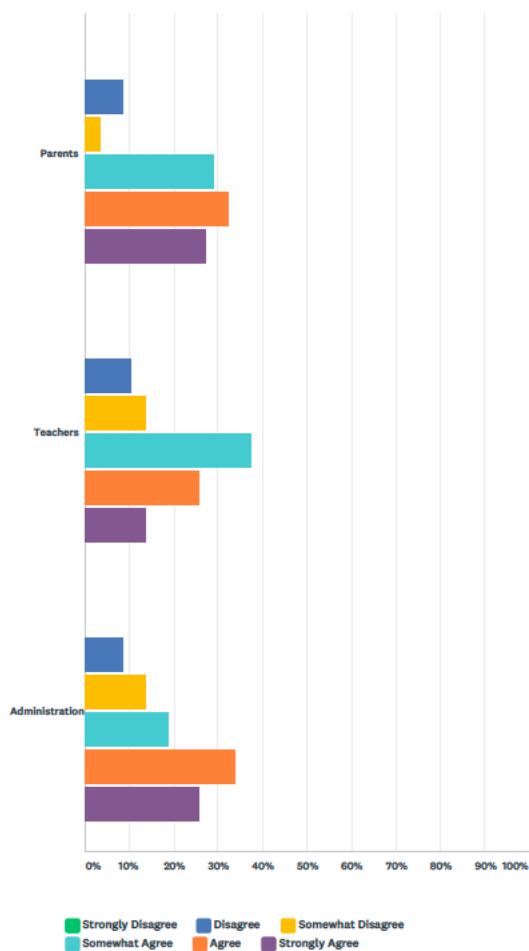
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONG AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Parents	1.89% 1	7.55% 4	11.32% 6	24.53% 13	45.28% 24	9.43% 5	53	4.32
Administration	3.45% 2	6.90% 4	8.62% 5	17.24% 10	48.28% 28	15.52% 9	58	4.47

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q17 IBDP final exam grades are used as the main indicator of the quality of your school by:

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



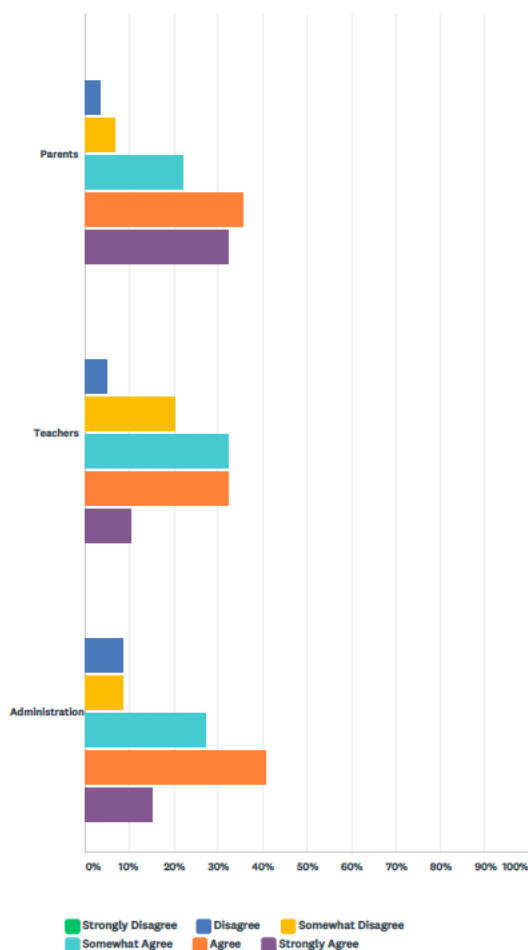
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Parents	0.00% 0	8.47% 5	3.39% 2	28.81% 17	32.20% 19	27.12% 16	59	4.66
Teachers	0.00% 0	10.17% 6	13.56% 8	37.29% 22	25.42% 15	13.56% 8	59	4.19
Administration	0.00% 0	8.47% 5	13.56% 8	18.64% 11	33.90% 20	25.42% 15	59	4.54

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q18 IBDP final exam grades are used in your school as the main indicator of the quality of a student's learning by:

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



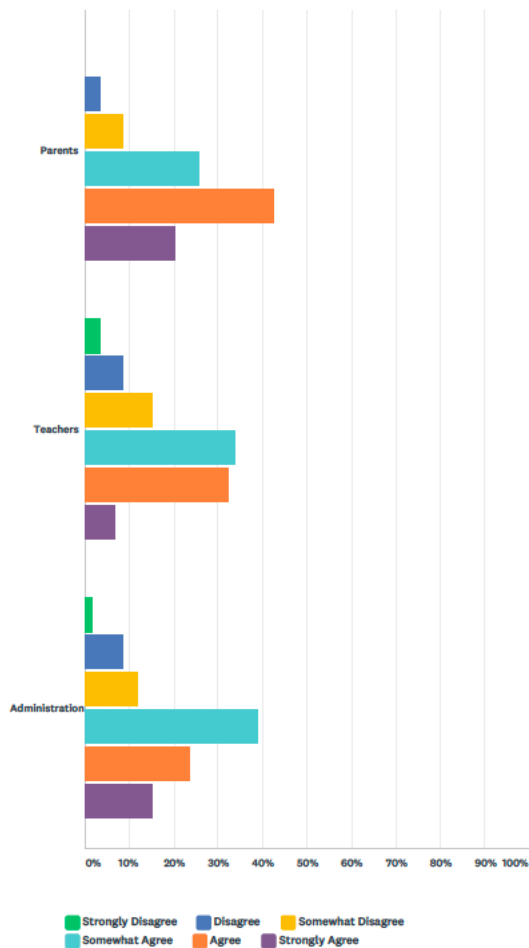
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Parents	0.00% 0	3.39% 2	6.78% 4	22.03% 13	35.59% 21	32.20% 19	59	4.86
Teachers	0.00% 0	5.08% 3	20.34% 12	32.20% 19	32.20% 19	10.17% 6	59	4.22
Administration	0.00% 0	8.47% 5	8.47% 5	27.12% 16	40.68% 24	15.25% 9	59	4.46

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q19 IBDP final exam grades are used in your school as the main indicator of teacher quality by:

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



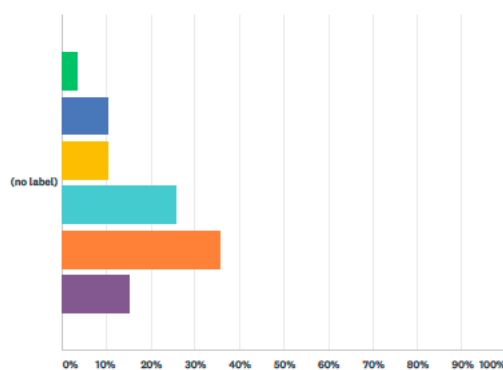
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Parents	0.00% 0	3.39% 2	8.47% 5	25.42% 15	42.37% 25	20.34% 12	59	4.68
Teachers	3.39% 2	8.47% 5	15.25% 9	33.90% 20	32.20% 19	6.78% 4	59	4.03
Administration	1.69% 1	8.47% 5	11.86% 7	38.98% 23	23.73% 14	15.25% 9	59	4.20

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q20 I feel limited in my ability to be experimental / innovative in the classroom because of pressures to prepare students for the IBDP final exams.

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



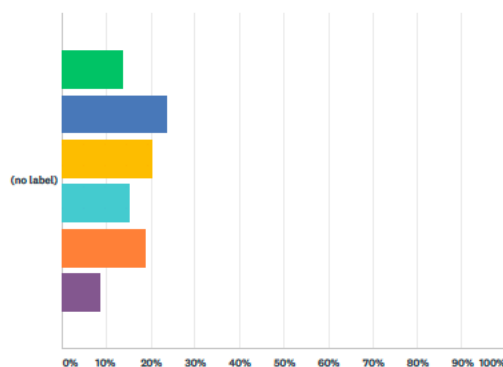
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	3.39%	10.17%	10.17%	25.42%	35.59%	15.25%	59	4.25
	2	6	6	15	21	9		

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q21 I feel limited in my ability to know and connect with my students as individuals because of pressures to prepare students for the IBDP final exams.

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



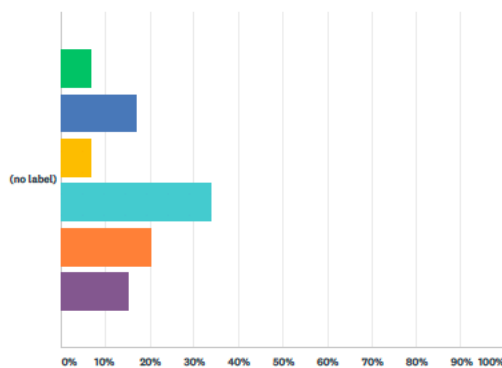
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	13.56%	23.73%	20.34%	15.25%	18.64%	8.47%	59	3.27
	8	14	12	9	11	5		

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q22 I feel limited in my ability to adapt my teaching to the individual learning needs of my students because of pressures to prepare students for the IBDP final exams.

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



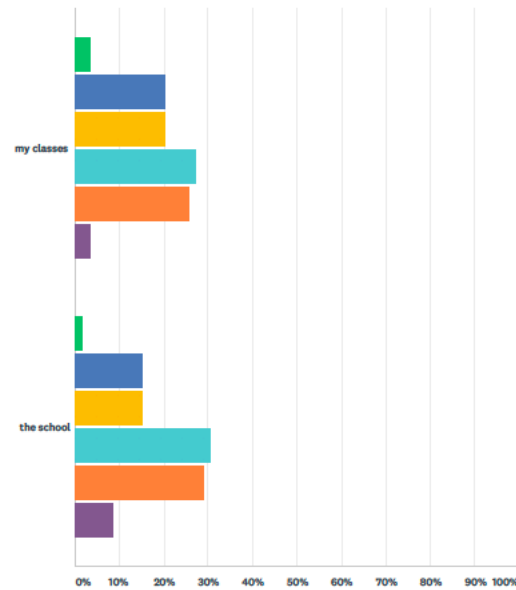
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	6.78%	16.95%	6.78%	33.90%	20.34%	15.25%	59	3.90
	4	10	4	20	12	9		

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q23 The IBDP promotes competition between students in:

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Somewhat Disagree
■ Somewhat Agree ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

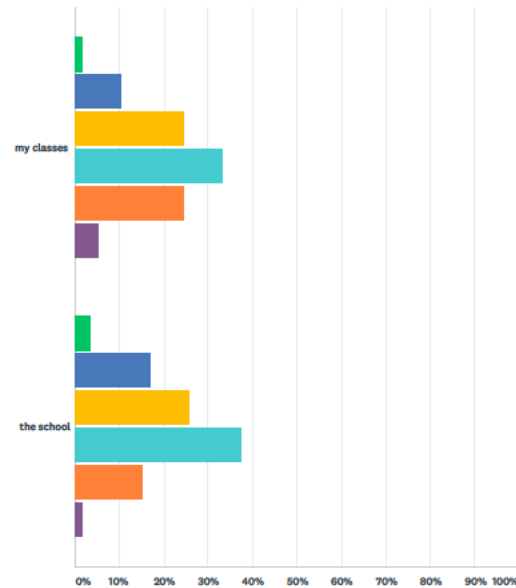
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
my classes	3.39% 2	20.34% 12	20.34% 12	27.12% 16	25.42% 15	3.39% 2	59	3.61
the school	1.69% 1	15.25% 9	15.25% 9	30.51% 18	28.81% 17	8.47% 5	59	3.95

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q24 The acquisition of the Learner Profile dispositions is an integral part of teaching and learning in:

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



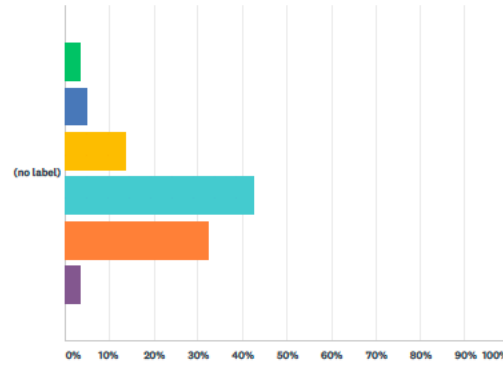
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
my classes	1.75% 1	10.53% 6	24.56% 14	33.33% 19	24.56% 14	5.26% 3	57	3.84
the school	3.39% 2	16.95% 10	25.42% 15	37.29% 22	15.25% 9	1.69% 1	59	3.49

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q25 The acquisition of the Learner Profile dispositions is an integral part of students' experiences in the IBDP Core (ToK, CAS, and the Extended Essay) at my school.

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



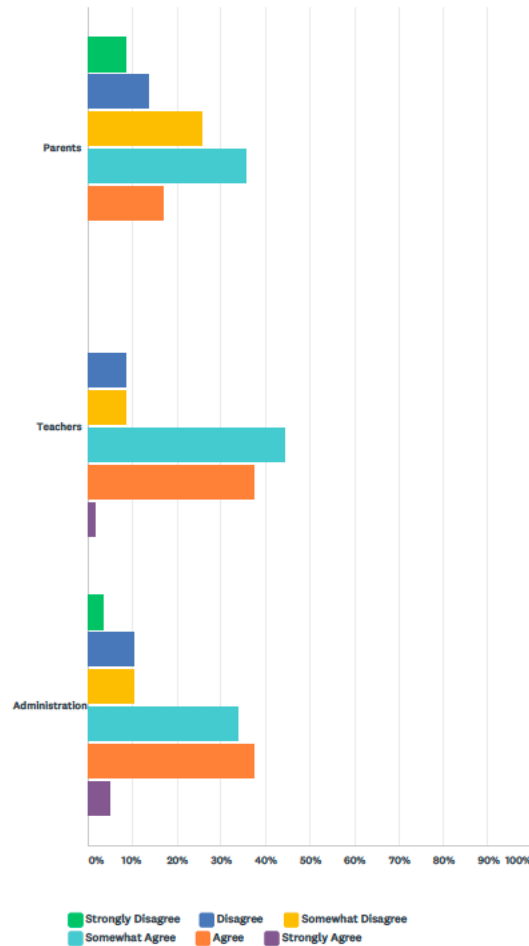
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	3.39%	5.08%	13.56%	42.37%	32.20%	3.39%	59	4.05
	2	3	8	25	19	2		

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q26 The acquisition of the Learner Profile dispositions is valued in the teaching and learning process at my school by:

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



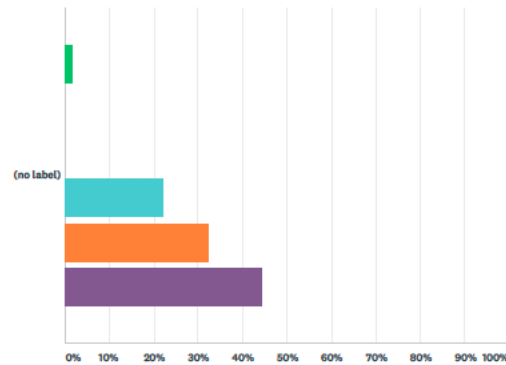
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Parents	8.47% 5	13.56% 8	25.42% 15	35.59% 21	16.95% 10	0.00% 0	59	3.39
Teachers	0.00% 0	8.47% 5	8.47% 5	44.07% 26	37.29% 22	1.69% 1	59	4.15
Administration	3.39% 2	10.17% 6	10.17% 6	33.90% 20	37.29% 22	5.08% 3	59	4.07

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q27 The IBDP prepares students well with key knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for academic success in university.

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



Strongly Disagree Disagree Somewhat Disagree
Somewhat Agree Agree Strongly Agree

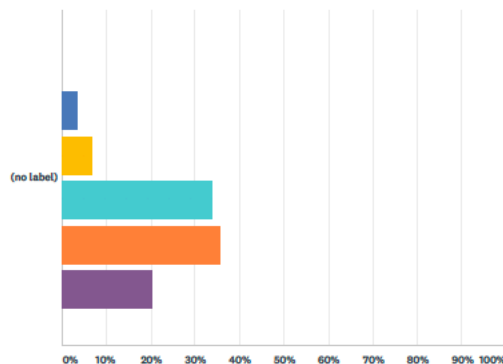
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	1.69% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	22.03% 13	32.20% 19	44.07% 26	59	5.15

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q28 The IBDP prepares students well with key knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for successful social integration in university.

Answered: 59 Skipped: 20



	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00%	3.39%	6.78%	33.90%	35.59%	20.34%	59	4.63
	0	2	4	20	21	12		

The Degree to which the IB Diploma Program Represents a Good Education

SurveyMonkey

Q29 If you are willing to participate in a 45-minute interview to determine the extent to which the IB Diploma Program represents a Good Education, please enter your email address below:

Answered: 10 Skipped: 69

Screen

40 / 40

Appendix 3 – Interview Questions

Interview Questions

Part 1 (10 minutes)

1. To what degree do you feel the measures of accountability in the IBDP at your school are effective in providing quality assurance of teaching and learning?
2. To what degree do the measures of accountability in the IBDP at your school help/hinder teachers' abilities to:
 - a. know students well and be able to differentiate based on individual learning needs?
 - b. be innovative and engage in student-centered learning?
3. To what degree does the IBDP prepare students with knowledge and skills to be academically successful and well socially integrated in university?

Part 2 (35 minutes)

1. To what degree does the IBDP educate students to be active, independent learners, who have agency in their learning?
 - a. In what ways does the IBDP realize this?
 - b. To what degree do the measures of accountability help/hinder this?
2. To what degree does the IBDP expect and allow for learning experiences that are designed to disrupt and challenge students' existing ways of being, thinking, and doing?
 - a. In what ways does the IBDP realize this?
 - b. To what degree do the measures of accountability help/hinder this?
3. To what degree does the IBDP educate students to be critically aware and self-reflective as a learner?
 - a. In what ways does the IBDP realize this?
 - b. To what degree do the measures of accountability help/hinder this?
4. To what degree does the IBDP educate students to be critically aware of societal norms (social, political, and/or economic)?
 - a. In what ways does the IBDP realize this?
 - b. To what degree do the measures of accountability help/hinder this?
5. To what degree does the IBDP expect, empower and provide opportunities for students to actively challenge and improve themselves and their communities as a result of their critical analysis and reflection?
 - a. In what ways does the IBDP realize this?
 - b. To what degree do the measures of accountability help/hinder this?
6. To what degree does the IBDP expect, empower and provide opportunities for students to engage in higher order thinking skills such as evaluation, analysis, and synthesis?
 - a. In what ways does the IBDP realize this?
 - b. To what degree do the measures of accountability help/hinder this?
7. To what degree does the IBDP expect, empower and provide opportunities for students to create knowledge as a result of their evaluation, analysis, and synthesis?
 - a. In what ways does the IBDP realize this?
 - b. To what degree do the measures of accountability help/hinder this?

Appendix 4 – Interview Transcripts

Anonymized Interview Transcript – Teacher 1 – February 19, 2020

Biographical Overview – DP Teacher 1

Position: DP Teacher – DP English / ToK Coordinator

Years in Position: 12

Years Working with IBDP: 17

Number of Students in IBDP Program @ Current School: 160

Interviewer: In terms of an introduction, the dissertation investigates the impact of neoliberal educational reform on national school systems like in the UK or US and is looking into the implications the measures of accountability have on teaching and learning. The purpose is to ultimately test the degree to which the IBDP in international school schools is able to provide a similar level of accountability and then investigate the degree to which the IBDP provides a good education.

The first part of the interview is more focused and follows up on a few points raised from the questionnaire in terms of the accountability piece. Then the main part of the interview looks at the degree to which the IB Diploma Programme can bring to life or does bring to life in its design a good education. The questions get at elements of what a good education could be or could look like.

Anything I ask if you have any clarifying questions, ask away. I'm happy to obviously add detail or explain or expand anything you're needing explained or expanded. In total, it shouldn't take too long, around 45 minutes.

Please note that I am recording our conversation and will ultimately turn it into an anonymized transcript that will be submitted with the final dissertation. If there is anything you would not like recorded, please let me know.

Teacher 2: I will.

Interviewer: The first question has to do with measures of accountability in the IB Diploma Programme. The framing question is, to what degree do you find that there is accountability in the IB Diploma Programme in providing true measures of assurance for the quality of teaching and learning? To what degree do you feel that as a parent who had a son go through or sons go through the program, did you feel like there were ways- or as a teacher teaching, were there ways to truly have some kind of check and balance for the overall quality?

Teacher 1: Well, certainly, I think the exams are well done. They do provide that quality assurance that they are looking for there. I think with the marketing of external assessments and the moderation of internal assessments I think is fine. I think that probably, in the case of certain subjects like English and TOK, while probably a lot of people, a lot of TOK teachers and English teachers would perhaps reject this idea, I think what really should be in place is much stricter guidelines on rubrics to be able to inform teachers what a good assessment in each category looks like.

I think that one of the biggest difficulties is actually most rubrics today have a lot of terms that aren't necessarily well-qualified, and a lot of students and parents somewhat rightly so say that there's too much of a degree of subjectivity when it comes to those rubrics. I think

that if you go through the examination processes I've done both with lang and lit and with TOK, then that definitely helps matters, but I think it would be good to even spot-check a teacher by sending them each cycle, five papers of whatever assessments from different places, have them grade it and turn it in and say, "Yes, you're on target." I think that would even help teachers understand the assessments better. I'm surprised they don't do that. I think that accountability measures are good, but I'm disappointed that the IB seems to put so much focus now, especially with the new changes on the final exams. I think there are ways in which to make those external and internal assessments accountable and I think a greater balance between the two should be struck.

Interviewer: With the recent changes in lang and lit, there's a greater focus on the final exam rather than the internal piece?

Teacher 1: Right.

Interviewer: One thing I need to do is help dry out, steer your answer. How is that seen or how was it and what does it shifted into?

Teacher 1: Well, previously, the course had been basically 50% the final exams and 50% other assessments. The graduating class that we have this year is going to be the final one of this particular set and Paper 1 and 2 are both worth 50% of their overall mark. The oral component that's made up of the further oral activities in which they can do multiple and then the teachers choose the best one and the oral commentary, basically an oral exam that the kids do. The written task work that the kids do in both standard level and higher level accounts for the other 50%.

Now, with the changes of this current Grade 11 group or IB Diploma 1 group that will be graduating first next May, that's shifted. Now, in higher level, something like 60% or more is the final exam percentage and for standard level, it's 70%. To me, that seems antithetical to what the IB would want to be doing and antithetical to what good pedagogical practices.

Interviewer: Thank you. In terms of the accountability measures and in terms of the ways in which, as a teacher, that quality assurance has looked to be validated, to what degree does that impede your ability to know your kids individually and to differentiate to them, to teach the kids who are in front of you?

Is it something that does get in the way or is it something that as a teacher, it doesn't limit your ability to teach to who's really in front of you?

Teacher 1: No. I don't find that limits me at all. The types of assessments in the course haven't really changed. The types of skills we're still trying to get students to build are relatively the same. Always, when the changes happen, it impedes a teacher to some degree just getting used to the changes. I think the biggest factors that impede a teacher's ability to help students on an individual basis and to differentiate are classes where you have a wide mixture of ability ranges and the class sizes. I find it easy to- well, not easy, but I don't find it onerously challenging to address the needs of between 16 and 22 different kids in my class. I would find it very onerous to address the needs of 24 to 32.

I think that in public schools, no matter what kind of program you're running, teachers would probably tell you the same thing. They can design, differentiate assessments to address some of those issues for large classes but at the end of the day, to try and identify an individual student's weak points and work with them to do that, that's only doable if you've got a manageable class size.

Interviewer: In terms of some of the elements- and it might be different within English, for example, in terms of the demands of content, the demands of getting through the content and the limited number of hours and getting kids ready for the exam, is that something where you feel pinched in any way as a teacher?

Teacher 1: No. I've never had a difficulty with that. English, thankfully, is more skills-based than content-based anyway. The only difficulty I find is in, sometimes, a skewed bias

towards cultural material on an unseen exam that would be something that a North American or a British or a kid growing up in an English-speaking country would have a reference point for. That, I think you're going to find on a lot of exams that are unseen passages anyway, those reference points might come up. I think if the IB could maybe pay more attention to that, something that was a little bit more open and eliminated those, I think that would be good. No, I don't find that with content, you have to worry so much.

The one thing for a lang and lit teacher that is always a struggle is teaching the conventions of the various text forms that can come up on an unseen Paper 1. That's a lot more of a struggle than it is for someone either teaching or a student taking the English literature course, which the text forms aren't there and you're basically looking at prose, nonfiction, prose, poetry, drama, that's it. Whereas for aligning with student and teacher, there are so many other forms that they have to know the conventions of.

Interviewer: The last question of this first part, kind of more quick reactive responses, to what degree do you feel the IB Diploma Programme prepares kids well academically for university?

Teacher 1: Academically, I think they prepare kids very well.

Interviewer: What about socially and emotionally?

Teacher 1: Socially and emotionally, I would say that's mixed. I think certainly, in terms of the degree to which there's an expectation that students self-manage, I think the IB Diploma, depending on the policies of the school that is running it, can do well to foster those things. I think a lot of that is dependent on the type of environment that the particular secondary school is providing as well as any advisory or pastoral care program.

Interviewer: For the second part, it's looking at different elements, different ways to bring to life what's, I guess for my purposes, I'm calling a good education. As part of a good education, the acquisition of certain skills, certain knowledge, those are taken as givens and most educational systems do that. For example, in the US and the UK, teaching to standardize tests, kids are kind of crammed, full of stuff, if you will. That's a necessary condition, but not necessarily a sufficient condition. The questions here begin to look at the idea of different ways that are truly broad, good, richer education or presence.

In terms of that, first question is when you're looking at and when you're teaching the IB Diploma Programme, in terms of its structure and its design, are there ways in which kids are actively taught to have agency in their learning to be independent, to be truly part of the learning process rather than having something imposed on them, if you will?

Teacher 1: Well, certainly, just in terms of some of the basics IE course selection and what students are actually choosing to take and what they want to focus on, what they choose to select as their higher levels, I think that does give them some agency. There are assessments within certain courses that I know do allow for student choice. Certainly, in terms of an extended essay, that is fairly wide open in terms of what subject area the students can choose relatively speaking. Obviously, they're perhaps limited, or they're pigeonholed maybe into some, depending on what their strengths in our level subjects are.

In terms of a broader scope of how much it allows students to do that, I think that if the IB wanted to allow more agency, I think there's a couple of ways they could do that relatively easily. I think number one is one of the ways in which you could revolutionize, I think the IB Diploma Programme overnight and make it a lot more accessible for kids is to actually have only two higher-level courses required instead of three. Forcing students I think to really take half of their subject load at higher level when maybe they don't think that they necessarily have either the interest or the skill set to do that, I think that takes away some of their choice. I think providing more choice in that would be a good idea.

I think certainly, in terms of what the IB requires students to take in terms of the core subjects and there's a really focus on, you have to be the master of all trades. There's not this

idea that you can pick and choose subject areas a little bit or decide that, "Well, I don't necessarily want to take a math or a science later on and I can take maybe a humanities course that would actually be something like economics that would involve statistics and have that." You're taking away student agency to some degree when you make so many requirements part of the IB Diploma Programme. I do think that within the program, still, course choices even on particular assessments and also things like the extended essay do allow choice to some degree.

Interviewer: Within the teaching and learning within the structures of the IB, the assessments, to what degree are our kids actively involved in that learning? Is it student-centered? Is it more inquiry-driven? Are they, if you will, subjects of the learning rather than objects into which they're given learning?

Teacher 1: Yes. One of the biggest challenges is that I would've said that the previous language and literature course offered, in fact, some potential for student agency. Now, it feels to me like it's actually more prescribed that what the IB is asking for has the illusion of openness to some degree. I shouldn't say it's all illusion. In terms of how teachers go about the course, I think it's there's a lot more that they can do. I think that in terms of actually allowing students to guide the curriculum development, I don't think that's really what ends up happening.

It may be something that the IB would want and would think that teachers and students, perhaps at the beginning of a Grade 11 year, would say, "Well, these are the types of things that we have to require. These are what needs to be met. Would you like to make some choices about some of the texts we study or the units that we do?" Too often, just the practicality of what the course needs to be don't really allow that. I think it ends up being a lot more teacher-driven. I don't know if that's necessarily a good or bad thing, but I think that's probably what it ends up being.

Interviewer: One of the ideas, His name is Gert Biesta, he's an educational philosopher and he talks about the idea of, a good education is one that engages in a pedagogy of disruption. By that, he means that as in design the course, in design the teacher, the teaching strategies, we should be out there purposely finding ways to poke at kids intellectually to disrupt their regular normal ways of being and doing and thinking and gently shaking them up so that they can come to see themselves and others in a different light. To what degree do you feel the diploma program through through its design through purpose engages in that type of needling of kids, if you will?

Teacher 1: Well, certainly, I would say the TOK course does a long way to do that and certainly gives teachers an awful lot of freedom to do that, which is great. Some of the changes that are coming to that course I think are going to offer that a lot more which I think will be good. That I think is one of the reasons why I enjoy teaching that course so much is because it does cause kids-- The best moments you have as a teacher are ones where that kind of light bulb goes off where they look at something in a different way that they didn't look at it before, or maybe notice or realize something in their everyday existence that they were taking for granted.

I think one of our jobs as teachers should be to foster a lot of that and peel back the veil of what everyday existence is to look at some of the motivations and driving forces behind our world and what it's about. I think the more we can do that, the better. I would actually say at least in terms of the subjects I teach, that there is a good amount of opportunity to do that and quite a bit of it, in fact.

Interviewer: TOK, I'm more versed and so I know. For the language and literature, what are some of the ways in which it structurally asks that of kids or allows that for you as a teacher to bring that to life?

Teacher 1: Well, one of the great things that I've had a lot of success with is exposing kids to what accent discrimination or at least what sort of dialectical prejudice is all about. It's something that I don't think people think about is that if you have a particular way of speaking, a lot of people will actually make assumptions about you most of the time that aren't necessarily true. I think especially in a world that is I think focused on discrimination that has to do with color or creed, it's one that we don't often notice and can affect people regardless of their ethnic group.

One of the things that I like showing is a clip from the Simpsons of Cletus, the Slack-jawed Yokel. The kids, when they see it, tend to react as most of us do. They tend to laugh at it. Then I'll show them actually some well-versed academics who speak with the same Appalachian accent and ask, "Okay, are you assuming the same things about this person?" Why is it that we assume that? Where do those assumptions come from? That's one way that has been really great to challenge students' assumptions, even in the countries that I've lived in, be able to challenge their assumptions of accents and dialects that they tend to mock in their own countries.

Interviewer: Is that something in you that was a good teacher who sees that as an avenue forward or is there something that's inherent in the Diploma Programme or that brings that to life?

Teacher 1: Well, it struck me as something very relevant in the course but I'm certainly not alone in doing that. A lot of even the course textbooks that are out there and available lead teachers down this avenue as one to possibly pursue. No, I don't. As much as I might like to, I won't pat myself on the back too much for that one. I think the course and the other texts that are out there offer that I think as a very easy avenue for a lot of teachers to get into and explore and one that's very relevant to the kids and that does shake them up.

Interviewer: Is there anything in the assessment criteria for lang and lit that looks to those types of abilities or skills in kids, if they're reaching the higher mark grounds?

Teacher 1: Indeed. Certainly, at least the course, in its present but soon to be changing iteration, one of the criteria in something like the further oral activity was an analysis of the connection between language and meaning and its significance, looking at how in fact, yes, there is assumptions being made in this text or even how certain characters are written with particular accents. The kids are actually asked to explore those things as reflected on the assessment.

Interviewer: Another element of a good education, I guess I'm arguing, or I would argue, is the idea of being critically aware of self and critically aware of society or the communities that you're in. For kids in a school, the society could be the class of 2020, it could be the high school, it could be the school, or it could be Bucharest, for example. To what degree is the IB Diploma Programme in your experience is purposeful in its design of getting kids to be critically aware of themselves, but also the societies in which they're living?

Teacher 1: Well, again, I think there's great opportunity within the core subject of TOK to do that. I don't know about how purposeful it is, but I would say that certainly, I feel that in what some of the requirements are of the TOK course and some of what's on the curriculum, it's inviting teachers to take that exploration route or even for students to take that exploration route. The same is probably true of the English language and literature curriculum. I think that it's not necessarily that it's trying to bottleneck teachers into that avenue, but it's leaving a door wide open I think to explore those kinds of things.

Interviewer: The second part of that question, it's good to be or it's important to be self-critical, it's important to be self-aware as well but also critical of society and then the other thing is to do more than that. We're pointing out ways to improve, we're pointing out flaws in self and system, but to what degree does the Diploma Programme empower or expect

students to go forward and make change and be active in terms of, "Okay, well, here's an issue, here's something I've uncovered. What can I actually do about this?"

Teacher 1: Well, my brief time as a CAS coordinator, there were certainly things that students I think were invited to do or that the CAS program left open for kids to do. I sometimes think that if the IB Diploma Programme wanted students to be more purposeful about the actual making change part, they would perhaps structure the CAS program a little bit differently. I can't speak to what it is now because it's been quite a while since I've coordinated the CAS program, but it's unfortunate that I find a lot of students fall into a trap of simply trying to tick boxes that it becomes something that on their IB Diploma Programme, they know they have to complete.

I don't want to detract from a lot of the work that students do in CAS and certainly, from a lot of the work that CAS coordinators do in making that experience for students meaningful. I'm certainly glad that they got rid of the hours requirement. I think that was one thing that was definitely dragging the program into that direction. I think that again, if you are allowing students I think more of a time opportunity to do that by, say, limiting the number of higher-level subjects you require and giving students more time to actually devote to those things, I think that perhaps a lot more students would actually organize things to go for change.

I also am not sure about how realistic it is to expect students to do that in a two-year period. Certainly, at schools that don't run the IB as a full K-12 program, some students come into Grade 11 not really having much experience with volunteer, active outside service. The goal is- and I know I've talked to other CAS coordinators that feel the same way, is that it's not necessarily to turn every 11th or 12th grader into a changed agent right when they're in Grade 11 and 12, but it's perhaps to plant seeds to make them do those things later.

Interviewer: The last two questions, they're connected. The first part looks to the expectation, the ways in which the IB Diploma Programme brings to life higher order thinking skills within kids, evaluation, analysis, synthesis. To what degree is that something that's programmatically there in the IB Diploma Programme?

Teacher 1: It's funny, I've been thinking a little bit about this. I wanted to wrap up my Grade 12 year with a special TOK seminar and then open it up for 9, 10s, 11s and other teachers to come as well. I want to actually refute, I think what I've heard even some administrators talking about that we somehow still live in an age of industrial education where everyone is being programmed to work in factories and the like. I don't find that to be the case. I think that what the IB Programme does and indeed, what a lot of other national and even provincial programs do, I mean, I've experienced on the Ontario program, I think actually, this is built into the program at least when I was teaching it.

The focus is not on road learning. The focus is not on memorization of names, dates, facts, et cetera. Even when I was a high school student in the early '90s, the idea was here are the circumstances of this particular historical event, these are the questions we have about it, what would your responses be given those types of things? I think certainly, in how the IB Diploma course gears the English program, even the experience I've had with the history program, the TOK program, it's absolutely asking for those higher order thinking. Indeed, in TOK, it's built into the rubric, it's what gets you those higher levels just to demonstrate that. I think sometimes, because it's marks-driven, it's unfortunate that students end up looking for the shortcuts to simply what would be indications of that, rather than it being the genuine article in terms of thinking. Certainly, there's an awful lot of students that I know come through the Diploma Programme that do have I think their eyes opened in a lot of ways and do end up being critical thinkers.

Anecdotally, a student I taught at the very beginning of my Diploma Programme course now is involved in filmmaking and was probably in danger when he was a late teen and even maybe in his early 20s, of going down perhaps a pretty dark path when people who were

around him might have steered him in a direction that would not have been healthy. In fact, he reached out to me and sent me a really long email gushing to say, "It was later that I realized what my education and what your classes had done for me. I was able to listen to what people were saying and really think about whether or not I thought it was right." It's great when you hear stories like that and I don't think in the IB Programme, they're all that rare.

Interviewer: Fair enough. Obviously, we benefit from having the chance to have those kids report back 5 and 10 years later and draw upon those anecdotes.

Teacher 1: Yes, definitely.

Interviewer: The last bit, it's connected to the idea of the higher order thinking skills. I guess this person's last point is, "It's good to have that," but then he's suggesting that we then use our skills to actually engage in the creation of knowledge, finding ways to come up with something new and novel, something different. I guess the preface there is that what's new and novel to an 18-year-old might not be revolutionary and groundbreaking to us or within the realm of the scientific community.

At their level, for a 17 or 18-year-old kid in the Diploma Programme, to what extent does the IBDP ask them or provide them with opportunities to truly create something new, something novel, engage in that idea of bringing knowledge to life?

Teacher 1: I think it does. I think it does it even before the Diploma Programme in terms of the personal project. We had a great session with the current Grade 10s at our school where one of them took a very, very careful analytical look at what her smartphone was doing to her and was able to report and say, "You know, I really realized how this was affecting me. I decided to limit my time and eliminate some of the apps I was using. I found that I was even in a better head space because of it." There's a success story right there.

I think in terms of even extended essay students that I've had, one of them contrasted speech writers and was sort of shocked when he was noticing patterns in this one politician's speech dating back couple of decades. "You can see this right here. It's the same stuff." I'm like, "Yes, isn't it amazing?" I think that you're absolutely right. The point that what's new and novel for an 18-year-old might not be for them but look, that doesn't mean it's not new and novel for them in their world. If it gets them questioning and looking at things a different way and pushing them into deeper critical thought, all the better.

Interviewer: Any questions you have for me in terms of any of the questions I asked or what I'll do with this information or how I'll use it? Any questions in terms of implications of participating in the interview?

Teacher 1: I trust I'll be credited accordingly for my wisdom is diverged.

Interviewer: Yes, very much so. Thank you much for your time. Those are the questions, I'm just formally wrapping up there, if you will.

Teacher 1: All right. Great.

Anonymized Interview Transcript – Teacher 2 – February 18, 2020

Biographical Overview – DP Teacher 2

Position: DP Teacher – DP History / ToK Coordinator

Years in Position: 18

Years Working with IBDP: 28

Number of Students in IBDP Program @ Current School: 400

Interviewer: In terms of an introduction, the dissertation investigates the impact of neoliberal educational reform on national school systems like in the UK or US and is looking into the implications the measures of accountability have on teaching and learning. The purpose is to ultimately test the degree to which the IBDP in international school schools is able to provide a similar level of accountability and then investigate the degree to which the IBDP provides a good education.

The first part of the interview is more focused and follows up on a few points raised from the questionnaire in terms of the accountability piece. Then the main part of the interview looks at the degree to which the IB Diploma Programme can bring to life or does bring to life in its design a good education. The questions get at elements of what a good education could be or could look like.

Anything I ask if you have any clarifying questions, ask away. I'm happy to obviously add detail or explain or expand anything you're needing explained or expanded. In total, it shouldn't take too long, around 45 minutes.

Please note that I am recording our conversation and will ultimately turn it into an anonymized transcript that will be submitted with the final dissertation. If there is anything you would not like recorded, please let me know.

Teacher 2: Okay.

Interviewer: The first question has to do with measures of accountability in the IB Diploma Programme. The framing question is, to what degree do you find that there is accountability in the IB Diploma Programme in providing true measures of assurance for the quality of teaching and learning? To what degree do you feel that as a parent who had a son go through or sons go through the program, did you feel like there were ways- or as a teacher teaching, were there ways to truly have some kind of check and balance for the overall quality?

Teacher 2: There's authorization in the first place, but it seems to me that it's pretty easy to get authorized to do the Diploma Programme when we looked at some of the schools that are authorized. Then this five-year review which I have actually, as an IB Coordinator, I've actually put on together. I was quite shocked at the IB's procedures. They sent me the wrong format for it. Then when I discovered when I was halfway through it, that they did send me the wrong format. They said, "That doesn't really matter. Do it in whatever format you want. Didn't get any feedback. No, I got one paper feedback from it. They don't really give you-- Well, other schools have been worked out where the five-year review has been taking place, that doesn't seem to have been much of a requirement by the IB for the IB coordinator to actually involve other members of staff in it. To me, it seemed like the IB coordinator just filled in a few forms, ticked a few boxes and wrote a few paragraphs. It wasn't really a self-

study in the same way that [inaudible 00:04:17] CIS is. I think a few people were selected to help out, but it didn't seem to be very-

Interviewer: Thorough.

Teacher 2: - thorough, very in-depth at looking at what we do, to be honest. Whether that's changed recently, I'm not quite sure because I haven't been involved in one for a few years now. I remember thinking it was just a kind of [unintelligible 00:04:43] We got to do this. It's not really difficult. I think it's left up to the schools to really look at the curriculum. I mean the individual subjects which is probably as it should be. Schools, obviously, to do their own checks and balances on how effectively they're teaching it through looking at the exam results and other measures that schools have in place for evaluating teachers. No, I don't think there are many checks and balances.

I know that UK and US universities highly value it because it's rigorous. I know that the IB's research suggests that UK students who have been to the IB Programme who go to US and UK universities usually find it easier to adapt and adjust and usually do very well. I know anecdotally from talking to my ex-students that they [unintelligible 00:05:54] about the IB. I think there is a lot of truth in the fact that it does prepare students well for further education.

Interviewer: To what degree do the exams service that measure of accountability? Is that something that transcends school to school? You mention the idea that internally, a school would measure exam results have checks and balance to see how well they're doing it. Is there something in the exams that helps sets kind of quality control if you will, across school settings?

Teacher 2: In the exams?

Interviewer: Through the exams.

Teacher 2: I'm not sure what you mean there. We can compare ourselves with the schools.

Interviewer: In doing so, for example, if you showed up to a little where you had different options in terms of DP schools, would that be an effective way for a parent to get some kind of idea of quality control? I could go to Brent; I could go to ISM.

Teacher 2: Yes. If you'd look at the stats.

Interviewer: To what degree, would that be an appropriate measure of accountability?

Teacher 2: Well, you're only seeing the results. You're not seeing the journey. But I think that is what a lot of parents are interested in.

Interviewer: I'm trying to pull it out a little bit.

Teacher 2: Sorry. I'm not quite sure what you mean. [chuckles]

Interviewer: What I hear you saying there is the results are piece of it, but the journey is-- Is it more important? Is it more significant in terms of the quality of education?

Teacher 2: Yes, I think so. Yes. I mean teaching kids how to learn.

Interviewer: Okay.

Teacher 2: Anybody can teach kids to- well, not anybody, but most teachers could teach kids to pass the exam that's as easy but it's not easy.

[laughs]

It would be- if that's the way we wanted to teach, it would be far easier to teach in that way than it would be to teach in a way which is aimed at getting kids to be lifelong learners. The IB encourages that but I think checks and balance is unless doing that, I don't think, really. Yes, I would want to know that. Is a teacher going to a new school or is parent putting kids in a new school, how would you actually teach in a classroom? I wouldn't just be interested in this--

Interviewer: Working in IB DP school, the exams that and are prescribed the mandated the content is more or less mandated? There's a little bit of wiggle room.

Teacher 2: Yes.

Interviewer: The timeframe, the hours, there are fair number of parameters in the phase. Given all of those parameters that are there, to what degree do you feel you as DP teacher or back when you're coordinating, how flexibility to truly adapt what you're doing to the kids when are in front of you? Is it a curriculum that allows you to differentiate well? Is it a curriculum that allows you to innovate? Can you take chances? Can you try to be innovative? How hemmed in do you feel?

Teacher 2: I feel hemmed in by the time. I don't think I feel hemmed in by anything else. I love the curriculum in history because there's so, so many options. It's really perspective at all. I can change it every year to suit the kids there in front of me if I wanted to and if I have time to prepare. But there again I could make it a lot more inquiry based depending on the kids that are in front of me as well. But the time, I just don't have the time to do it. The curriculum is far, far too big. In standard level it's not but at a higher level, it is. The depth that they require us to go in to is really limiting in terms of being able to innovate and to take risks, to be perfectly honest.

Towards the end of the course every year, it does lead to a more kind of lecture-based style of teaching which is a bit unfortunate. I'd love to teach just standard level, that would be bliss. Could really have some fun with that. That's the only thing that I feel hemmed in by. With TOK, yes. I mean, that doesn't have [unintelligible 00:10:31] when you can just be very innovative with that.

Interviewer: Then a quicker question and more reaction, to what degree do you feel the diploma program prepares kids well for a university? One, on an academic side and then two, on social and emotional side?

Teacher 2: Academic side very well. Social and emotional, no better or no worse than A-level, so I don't think community service obviously is something that I think kids reflect on later and see the value of it, although I think a lot of them don't see the value of doing it at that time. I think we, the IB Diploma, obviously sees learning has been more holistic and that's obviously good for students socially and emotionally as well, but we the IB talks a lot about the whole person but yet it's such a demanding program that it doesn't often give students the chance to be have a whole life [laughs] while they're actually in the program, but then again, when they're at university, I guess that kind of means they find University a lot less stressful.

Interviewer: Then the second part, the questions are meant to bring to life more of what a good education is meant, and so the questions are geared around different elements of that. The first one is the degree to which students can be independent, active participants in their learning or define to frame it is students can take agency in terms of what they're learning, to what degree the kids have control over what they're learning in terms of, maybe the content, maybe how they're assessed, where they might want to go, is it something that they can be very well independently involved in or is it something that comes more apt to them?

Teacher 2: I would say in the six subjects that they choose to study it comes apt to them. The teacher decides often, usually and that's the curriculum that we're covering for these two years. guys. There are some choices, internal assessments and such like, students can obviously choose to pursue something that they want-- if the teacher allows them to, I mean, some teachers will say, "No, you've got to do something that's on the curriculum or related to the curriculum." Where there are other teachers I know will say, "No, no, it's fine, you can look at whatever you want to look at as long as you can get the resources for it."

I think it depends partly on the teacher but the IB allow for the students to pursue their own interests, the same that extended essay TOK presentations, yes, you can within sort of framework of the TOK presentations there's a lot of freedom there. Casts, well, that depends where you live as to what's possible, but students have got a lot of opportunities there to take risks and to explore where they live. Again, it's often very much controlled by the school,

isn't it? I think a lot of it comes-- yes, the IB provides the framework to allow for that, I think a lot of it comes down to the schools and the teachers.

Interviewer: Yes, [unintelligible 00:14:49]. One of the premises of- his name is Gert Biesta, he's talking, or he frames the idea of a good education as one that is a pedagogy of disruption. He talks about the idea of us teachers, what we should be doing is finding ways to gently poke and prod, shake kids up a little bit to get them out of their natural habitual--

Teacher 2: Comfort zones?

Interviewer: Yes, and get to see themselves in the worlds in very different ways. Are there any elements or to what degree are there elements of the IBDP, that are purposeful in terms of trying to disrupt and challenge students' existing ways of being and doing and knowing?

Teacher 2: TOK, definitely. That's the whole point of TOK, I think. [laughs] I love doing that. I think that's best thing ever, where a kid makes a huge assumption in class and you can prod at that assumption and get them to look at it from another perspective. A lot of the times you get a lot of resistance but most of the time you get somewhere even if you don't get quite to where you want to get to. It's clear case that it's a bit like castle of kids don't see the point of it while they're doing it, but they get it later and that's one of the reasons, one of the things that they get. Yes, it just brings all sorts of assumptions to light that even if you don't get product someone's assumption someone else at the class will.

TOK purposefully does that. Do other subjects? I don't really know. I suppose casters, the service element to cast, very much does. I think a lot of our students are very privileged and they've got a whole load of assumptions about people who are less privileged than themselves and so getting them out into the community and working with those people changes their view. Creativity part of cast, I think students get pigeonholed very quickly and say, "I'm not a creative person."

But they can discover something new about themselves through that. I mean, my own subject history, all the time, people have got a very-- kids tend to come into history, even if they've been studying it in ninth and 10th grade thinking that history is just a study of the past and that there's just one story to be told and they often don't understand that there's lots of different versions of history. That can be quite eye-opening for kids, especially kids who haven't done history as a discipline by itself, kids who've done integrated or combined humanities courses often come in with that idea that there's one version of history. Have I gone out or the point of your question?

Interviewer: No, no. it's perfect, just the idea of-- yes, what I'm hearing you say is kids coming into history is disrupting how they've come to see things through the idea that it's not just something. here's what happened to some objective. The course is designed, I'm assuming--

Teacher 2: -to yes, look at a different perspective, and I guess, psychology is kind of like that as well. From what I know about the psychology course, they look at it through the four different psychological approaches. Economics from what I know, economics isn't something that I'm very good at, my experience of economics teachers is they teach it from the perspective in which they believe. They'll teach it from a Keynesian perspective, they'll go teach it from-- what's the other one? I've forgotten the other one. [laughs]

Interviewer: The whole ideas is this should be all kinds. We should be looking at whether it's--

Teacher 2: Yes, but economics teachers in my experience don't do that.

Interviewer: That might not be something necessarily in the design of the course, is it more down to you as a strong history teacher or do you think there's something implicit in the-

Teacher 2: No, there's something implicit in the course? It's written into the rubrics, it's clearly in the documentation that we have to look at it through different perspectives.

Interviewer: Yes. Having taught economics, I think there is too.

Teacher 2: Okay. It's badly taught in my last school then. I'm not making a comment on my-

Interviewer: Fair enough.

Teacher 2: [unintelligible 00:19:24] crossed the corridor too. My last school, there was one teacher that taught it very much from a lefty liberal perspective and the other way it was a kind of saturate.

Interviewer: Okay, Okay, yes. Ideally, it should be exposing kids to-
[crosstalk]

Teacher 2: Well, others yes, because I'm not an economist. [chuckles]

Interviewer: Another element, hopefully, that a good education brings to life is pedagogy educational experiences, that get kids to be critically aware of self and also critically aware of their communities. The community could be their history classroom, a community could be the school or community could be their host country, to what degree does the IB Diploma program want and make come to life kids becoming critically aware of themselves, but also of the systems that they're living in and working in and studying in?

Teacher 2: Okay, and apart from TOK, I'm not quite sure that it particularly-

Interviewer: In a way not?

Teacher 2: -does do that. Again, I think that's something that comes with the delivery. That's something that school controls. The IB can put that forward as this is what a good IB school should try to do and TOK is a great framework for that. I don't think they can really control that or enforce that. I think that has to stay within the ethos of the school. They talk about TOK into creation and that's one thing that can obviously help with that but I'm not-- Until recently, they haven't really produced much material to help us with that.

Interviewer: Is it the material that's supporting or is it the valuing of it through assessment? If there were measures of accountability, like the exam that forced it, do you think that would bring it to life?

Teacher 2: Probably, yes. [laughs] Yes, if you're going to grade it. Sadly.

Interviewer: Then the second part of that question, in terms of kids becoming critically aware of self or critically aware of the communities they're working in, does it provide, or does it expect the kids to truly make changes to self or to the communities? Is it a curriculum that finds ways to bring to life?

Teacher 2: I think it encourages; I don't think it expects it. I think it acknowledges it. Do they still have the award for exemplary service projects and things? They used to have that a few years ago. I don't know if they still do.

Interviewer: I think it might be more internal. I think schools would bring that to life.

Teacher 2: Yes, okay. There used to be something where you could nominate a particular service group for more special recognition from the IB. I don't know if they still do it or not.

Interviewer: Not that I know. I don't think so anymore.

Teacher 2: Okay, that's a shame. They should do that; they should do that. So, no, I don't think they expect it. I think they encourage it. It's a problem because again, it comes down to where your schools are to actually try and affect change in some regions of the world would be really dangerous. You don't want to put different sets of rules for one school and another set of rules for another school dependent on that region.

Interviewer: Yes. Then the last two questions are connected. In terms of the devolve program, does it expect and provide opportunities for students to engage in higher-order thinking skills such as evaluation analysis, synthesis?

Teacher 2: Yes, very much so.

Interviewer: In what ways do you see it based upon your experiences? Or have you seen it?

Teacher 2: Well, it's in the rubrics. At my own subject, it's very much about looking at different perspectives and evaluating those perspectives and talking about the values and

limitations of them. It's always about that. It's really integral to the way that the subject is taught. It's really university-level thinking, actually. It's beyond anything that is done at A-level in the UK and beyond anything that I've ever heard of it being done in US schools. If you compare it to AP, which is just kind of rote learning stuff, even though they try and say it's, "We have document-based questions and all the rest of it.

Well, yes, they do but they don't expect any of those skills to be integrated into other assessments, it's standalone. Whereas in IB, it's very much, you will integrate that into your extended essay or your internal assessment and into the essays that you write in the exams. It's very much higher-order thinking. You've really got to do it well to get a seven in history. It's so difficult.

Interviewer: Within the criteria, I think it's mandated.

Teacher 2: It's absolutely central to it. With TOK as well, it's central to it. I think they do quite a good job there, actually. Sometimes I think they're perhaps a little bit too-- they expect a little bit too much especially in history.

Interviewer: Then it's there in the assessment criteria, to get a seven in terms of the application of those higher-order thinking skills, I think kids are asked to kind of apply knowledge in a new and novel way, to what degree across your experiences have you seen the IBDP expect kids or allow kids the opportunity to truly create knowledge, to come up with something new and novel? Not paradigm breaking from a global sense, it could be new to them, if you will but are there ways in which IBDP as a program expects kids to engage in the creation of knowledge?

Teacher 2: Yes. Again, extended essays, internal assessments and a lot of the time it's knowledge which is new to them but usually in my experience, extended essays which are rather different in what they're investigating do well in history and same with internal assessments as well.

Interviewer: Yes. In terms of the IAs in history, what would one look like if it were creating knowledge? Any examples?

Teacher 2: I think that's perhaps not such a good example thinking of it really. Because they're so short, there's not really--

Interviewer: Even in an extent, any concrete example of how a student could- in history through an IA, through extended essay?

Teacher 2: Okay. I had one a couple of years ago, it was a girl looking at-- she was looking at the relationship between Mao and Tito, which isn't really a relationship which is very widely studied, it's due to Tito and Stalin. She was looking at the influence of Mao on the-- now what was it? That was the influence of Mao on Tito's split from the Soviet Union that was it. Which was like, "Oh my gosh, how are you going to do this? Where you're going to get your evidence from, and will it even be in English?" It was really ambitious, but she was a really bright student, we like to go with it, I think she got B. She probably was a little bit too difficult.

Interviewer: But there was an opportunity there?

Teacher 2: Yes, there was an opportunity there. Yes, the IB allows those essays, allows for that but again, I think it's a school that controls it not the IB. Quite imagine a lot of the history teachers say, "No, you can't do that, it's way too complicated." I think I know because I've worked in the IB system for so long that they do like that sort of thing, they do tend to reward that.

There's no worries especially where they-- they didn't really emphasize it in their material that they want that, I just know that they like it. They talk about quality sources, but they don't really give us any examples of what they mean by top quality sources. We just know that as historians, I guess. I don't think I knew that necessarily. When I was first teaching it in my 20s, I've talked to examiners over the years, I've been an examiner, and you get inside

information for being an examiner which really should be out there to be fair. I've got a colleague who's on the Curriculum Review Committee for history, and I know so much because of that. This is inside information, what's that all about?

Interviewer: Maybe pushing us all to become insiders. You can't argue then?

Teacher 2: No, I don't want to anyway because I haven't got time.

Interviewer: What questions do you have about anything that I've asked or clarifications in terms of--

Teacher 2: No, what's that the answers you were looking for or was I not really--

Interviewer: Very much on point.

Teacher 2: Okay. All right then.

Interviewer: Thank you very much for your time.

Teacher 2: You're welcome. Was it okay?

Interviewer: Perfect.

Anonymized Interview Transcript – Teacher 3 – February 12, 2020

Biographical Overview – DP Teacher 3

Position: DP Teacher – DP Physics

Years in Position: 15

Years Working with IBDP: 15

Number of Students in IBDP Program @ Current School: 140

Interviewer: In terms of an introduction, the dissertation investigates the impact of neoliberal educational reform on national school systems like in the UK or US and is looking into the implications the measures of accountability have on teaching and learning. The purpose is to ultimately test the degree to which the IBDP in international school schools is able to provide a similar level of accountability and then investigate the degree to which the IBDP provides a good education.

The first part of the interview is more focused and follows up on a few points raised from the questionnaire in terms of the accountability piece. Then the main part of the interview looks at the degree to which the IB Diploma Programme can bring to life or does bring to life in its design a good education. The questions get at elements of what a good education could be or could look like.

Anything I ask if you have any clarifying questions, ask away. I'm happy to obviously add detail or explain or expand anything you're needing explained or expanded. In total, it shouldn't take too long, around 45 minutes.

Please note that I am recording our conversation and will ultimately turn it into an anonymized transcript that will be submitted with the final dissertation. If there is anything you would not like recorded, please let me know.

Interviewer: The first question has to do with measures of accountability in the IB Diploma Programme. The framing question is, to what degree do you find that there is accountability in the IB Diploma Programme in providing true measures of assurance for the quality of teaching and learning? To what degree do you feel that as a parent who had a son go through or sons go through the program, did you feel like there were ways- or as a teacher teaching, were there ways to truly have some kind of check and balance for the overall quality?

Teacher 3: In terms of the kids' classroom experience?

Interviewer: Yes. That's a way to frame it. In a broad sense, the measures of accountability that they have, a different way to frame it, would you feel comfortable if your son or daughter were to go through the program? Would you think that it's got sufficient credibility in terms of its overall quality of teaching and learning?

Teacher 3: Yes, definitely. It does.

Interviewer: Any thoughts in terms of ways in which the IB Diploma program provides that credibility, that accountability?

Teacher 3: Yes. Obviously, on the one hand, you have the exams that are externally moderated, so that means that there is some sort of an end product that everybody is having to take. Those are quite rigorous. You also, of course, have the internal assessment, but that's also externally moderated, so there's another accountability piece. Then, the other piece I would say is certainly their requirements of regular training of teachers so that there is, I would say, an effort to make sure that everybody has an understanding of what the program is about.

Interviewer: In that case, I think I know what you mean by everybody. When you say everybody, what do you mean by everybody?

Teacher 3: I'm thinking more that the teachers and the administration who is involved in actually carrying out the program, that they have an understanding of what the IB is about and that they're able then to share that and communicate that with the parents and with the students.

Interviewer: I don't want to put words in your mouth. Would it be fair to say that part of everybody transcends just a given school? In terms of the training, the fact that you're a DP trained teacher, Randy Brown was-- Andrew [unintelligible 00:03:40] was who I worked with 17 years ago. Is it fair to say that there's a bit of accountability or a bit of coherence even across schools?

Teacher 3: Yes, I think so. You can see that in a sense that it's very easy for an IB teacher to pick up and move from one school to another school. That's always the easiest transition because the syllabus is the same, the expectations are the same, and you take the existing framework that you have, and you just adapt it to small things. Whereas, if I'm thinking about my generic grade nine science class very specifically to the school, and I think that's where you can really see that difference.

Interviewer: The measures of accountability are there, so in terms of exams, in terms of external moderation, in terms of the content that's prescribed to you, to what degree does that allow you to truly teach well to the kids who are in front of you? Are the measures of accountability such that it impedes your ability to teach to who your kids are in any way?

Teacher 3: That's a good question. Yes and no [chuckles]. I would say in ideal circumstances, and I think for me, what I'm really thinking about here is sufficient time, I think that I can teach in the way that I want to to meet the needs of, let's say, 95% of my students. I do think though that time factor comes up over and over again in most schools, so that's what makes it difficult.

From that respect, I would say that sometimes, the fact that in physics, there's too much content to cover a normal two-year course makes it difficult for me to maybe teach all students as well as I would like to.

Interviewer: Is it a similar type of answer in terms of your ability to be innovative or to do things, or take risks? Do you feel that you can take risks within your teaching and try some new ways of--

Teacher 3: Yes.

Interviewer: Yes?

Teacher 3: Definitely. I am currently. This past summer, I took a course on modeling instruction, which is basically a research-based method of teaching science, and I've been implementing that in my IB class, so I don't feel that I can't be creative or innovative. I guess I would say, if there are limitations, they tend to be limitations from the school side of things rather than from the IB. I don't feel like there's anything that the IB particularly does that would make me say, "I can't or can't teach in a certain way." I would say it's limitations that are imposed by school structures that limit me more.

Interviewer: Then, this is more of a straightforward question. Do you feel that the IBDP not just within physics but across subjects, to what degree do you think it prepares kids well for university?

Teacher 3: It prepares them really well. First of all, because they do have to get a quite broad education so they're not specializing too early, so they're obtaining skills across a broad range of subjects, but I think the exams themselves in the courses are rigorous. They have exposure to having to do the higher-level thinking and having to manage quite a lot of coursework, having to take exams, and be responsible for two years' worth of material. A lot of those skills that they need in university are developed in both [unintelligible 00:07:18]. Well, before the last two years as well, but particularly through the IB.

Interviewer: You mentioned a little bit there in terms of managing coursework and being responsible for two years, the earlier parts, we'll do a little bit more academic, any thoughts in terms of how well it prepares students for the social adjustments to university and in terms of fitting in more broadly to what life is like in university? It may not do that, so I guess one is, to what degree does it do that?

Teacher 3: I'm not so sure on the social side of things how much it does. I suppose there is that component of internationalism that maybe hopefully makes our students be a little bit more open-minded. I suppose that aspect is there, but I think that maybe it also depends a little bit on how much that's carried out by the school as well. I'm not sure that that's such a guarantee from a school that's implementing an IB program.

Interviewer: Yes, particularly in contrast to the academics more so because there is the measures of accountability there?

Teacher 3: Yes, exactly.

Interviewer: Okay. The second part is, the main focus of what the dissertation is about, and it's looking more broadly at the IB as functioning as a good education. By that, I think the point there is moving beyond the acquisition of knowledge and content, and it's finding ways that the IB Diploma asks kids to go above and beyond. There are few questions here that get at that in different ways, so the first question, to what degree do you feel that the IBDP educates students to become independent learners, learners who have agency and control over what they're doing? As part of that, if that's the case, in what ways could you or have you seen that?

Teacher 3: It does a pretty good job of that. Specifically, in my subject, I would say one big aspect could be the IAs of the internal investigation. Students do have to be able to plan, carry out, and analyze data from an experiment that they've done on their own, and I think that if you're preparing them well to do that, that means that you're teaching them a lot of how to be independent and how to think on their own, and [unintelligible 00:10:08] to say in the questions that you're going to ask on the exam.

It's not just rote memorization, it is that deeper level of thinking and being able to apply knowledge to new situations. The IB definitely has that focus from that perspective as I see it in physics. I see that as well in the more global parts. Certainly, the extended essay is a huge undertaking for kids of that age group having to carry out such a big research project. That's another big independence piece. Then, on the less academic side, CAS comes in there, of course, as well, especially with the CAS project. Yet again, a lot of planning, a lot of having to do things on their own. The IB does hit that quite nicely through a variety of different ways.

Interviewer: Are there any ways in which the measures of accountability get in the way? You mentioned the idea in terms of the IA helping that, extended essay helping that. Any ways in which you're seeing the measures of accountability mentioned before hindering kids' independence or hindering their ability to truly take control of their learning?

Teacher 3: Well, the fact that you have a prescribed curriculum is in some ways going to get in the way of taking control of their own learning because it means that if you have kids who are really interested in one particular area [inaudible 00:11:37] exam, and I discovered that they were really interested in one part of physics, we might delve into that more deeply. If we weren't as worried about exams, we would have more time to do some more creative projects where they might, let's say, do some sort of an engineering component or apply what they've learned. Maybe more on that, also MYP style where you think about the impacts of science on humanity and explore those areas. Those are things that we don't have time to do because, ultimately, there is that exam at the end. That's where the accountability piece gets in the way.

Interviewer: One of the things that comes from-- his name is [unintelligible 00:12:19], and he talks about the idea of a good education as one of having a disruptive pedagogy. He's current, if you will, and he draws a lot on John Dewey in terms of finding ways to break kids out of what they're used to. Are there any ways in which, not you as a teacher, but the IB DP in and of itself do things purposefully to try and challenge kids' way of knowing or challenge kids' way of being and thinking? Anything that's embedded in the physics from the IB DP standpoint that truly jogs them or disrupts them, that tries to get them to break out of a paradigm?

Teacher 3: I mean, some of the physics content just in and of itself does that, but whether or not it was designed to do that is another question. I'm just thinking how I'm teaching my kids quantum physics right now and that still is a little mind-blowing for them.

Interviewer: Yes, but even the fact that that curricular demand is there.

Teacher 3: Yes. The fact that you're choosing to include that in the curriculum means that that does challenge how they think about things because it takes all of the physics that they've learned and turns it upside down and says, actually, at least-- Today, I was telling them that math turns into energy and they were just like, "Whoa, how is that possible? That can't be." From the curriculum perspective, yes, there are pieces that are there. Beyond that, I'm not sure that I see a huge amount. There's the ability for teachers to put it into place by making TOK connections, for example, but if we go back to that accountability piece, that ends up being very teacher dependent.

Interviewer: Then, the other-- I guess somewhat connected. Are the ways in which the course of your experiences in the IB DP purposefully educate students to become more critically aware of themselves as a learner?

Teacher 3: The question is--? Sorry [chuckles].

Interviewer: [unintelligible 00:14:33]. To what degree does the IB DP enable or purposely educate students to become more critically aware of themselves?

Teacher 3: Somewhat. I see it a lot more in the MYP than I do at the DP. In the MYP, I think that reflection process is far more embedded. In DP, I see that reflection process embedded. Now, it has become embedded in the extended essay and in the CAS program, but within physics, there's nothing embedded there. If it's happening, if you're getting them to think about how they learn, I would say that, again, becomes something teacher dependent. In fact, I would say there may be used to be more of that when the group four project was a bigger deal in science. We used to have to grade them on personal skills and we talked to them about it and made them think about it. That piece actually is gone now. I would actually say in terms of physics itself, it's not very present.

Interviewer: Anything there in terms of the diploma program? The first question is, is there, and if there is any, to what degree, where students are being educated to become more critically aware of societal norms? That can be broad, in terms of social norms, political norms, economic norms, norms within the scientific community, the ways in which it's purposeful in terms of challenging what is beyond at that more societal structural level.

Teacher 3: I would have to say my experiences with that, we don't do very much of that in the DP. It's certainly very, very tangential in the DP physics course. That piece is done really well in the MYP, but that piece disappears when you get to the DP. In the MYP in science, you have the criterion D, and then that goes away. In the extended essay, if they're writing a physics extended essay, it's not there. Probably, maybe in the world studies, you might get into it, but otherwise, I don't really see that it's really usually addressed.

Interviewer: This is probably more broadly across the diploma program than just in physics. Are there ways in which the IBDP, the program empowers and provides opportunities for students to challenge and improve themselves and also challenge and improve their communities based upon self-reflection or critical analysis of self and community?

Teacher 3: It comes in pretty nicely with the CAS program because certainly, they have the goals that they have to set within CAS, things that they have to achieve that are more personal. Then, with the CAS project and with this whole service component, that does give them the opportunity to look within their community and see how to improve. CAS does a really good job there.

Interviewer: Any other ways across the program? There could be ways within physics that I'm not aware of.

Teacher 3: Within physics, I can't really think of anything. I suppose within the extended essay, particularly world studies, extended essay, I couldn't see with the whole local global focus that that would-- I guess if I think about the reflections that they now write in the extended essay, that gets at that as well.

Interviewer: The next one, does it happen? If so, to what degree does the IBDP purposefully provide kids opportunities to engage in higher-order thinking skills such as evaluation, analysis, synthesis, and hopefully, ultimately, to the even creation of new knowledge? I know within physics, that's probably a tall order, but to what degree are kids necessarily engaged in higher-order thinking skills? Are there any ways in which they're actually tasked with trying to come up with something new and novel?

Teacher 3: Actually, there's a lot of that. When you say things like evaluating and analyzing, I feel like that's a huge component of what we do in science. The IAs certainly gets students to a higher order of thinking. They might not be creating new knowledge, but certainly, for some of their projects, they're taking scenarios where there isn't necessarily a right answer out there and trying to make sense of it. I've actually just been reading my kids IAs. I'm pleasantly surprised at how they're able to apply physics in all those situations. There are a lot of opportunities for that. The extended essay, of course, is another good area for that.

Interviewer: Any other ways?

Teacher 3: I suppose within CAS as well, there are opportunities for higher-order thinking, particularly if they're organizing some sort of a project and trying to put various bits and pieces together and make something work.

Interviewer: I'm prompting you a little bit. Any other links in terms of the core elements of the DP program that you might bring to life within your physics class once in a while?

Teacher 3: Well, TOK, of course [laughs].

Interviewer: Obviously, I'm prompting you at joking. To what degree does that actually filter in at a meaningful level of day to day in your class? I know it's a goal and it's a nice goal, but with the time constraints you mentioned with all the other things going on, is it something that's meaningfully brought to life or is it more of a nice add-on that would be good if we could--?

Teacher 3: Probably somewhere in between. There are parts of physics for me where I very naturally see connections and will certainly bring it up. Clearly, right now, when I'm doing nuclear physics and quantum physics, talking about-- because we get into that historical piece

of the paradigm shifts that happen in science, and also just the different ways that people learn. There are times when there are some really nice TOK connections.

I do try to bring those. Then, there are other times when I ignore TOK quite a bit. Maybe if I had more time, I would probably think about it a little bit more. I have to say though, maybe as a certain underlying philosophy. I'm working, I'm trying to get my kids to not view me as the source of knowledge but to construct their knowledge from what we're doing in class. That fundamentally fits in with TOK of how do we know what we know. It shouldn't be because your teacher told me. I don't know that I meet that explicit TOK connection for them, the physics TOK idea.

Interviewer: In terms of you and generally trying to push kids away from seeing you as the authority, is that something in you as a good teacher or do you feel that there's something in that within the DP that also helps bring that to life?

Teacher 3: That's probably more my idea of what it is to be a good teacher. I'm not sure that the IB necessarily-- I feel it's maybe probably aligned with their goals, but I'm not sure that it's explicitly-- I don't want to say explicitly stated, but I don't know that there's anything there that's really forcing people to do that.

Interviewer: Then, the last one is more targeted in terms of that piece of being able to truly create knowledge. Obviously, within physics, there's the lab work there. You mentioned the exams early in terms of the kids that are taking knowledge and applying it to unforeseen circumstances or an extended essay. Would it be a fair statement to say the kids are tasked with that or they have an opportunity to do that? Some just go above and beyond? To what degree is that an element of the IBDP that you feel is something you're trying to push kids towards? Was it maybe more of a nice kind of happenstance?

Teacher 3: [laughs] That's a hard question. Sometimes, it's hard to figure out how much of that is the IB and how much of that is the desires that I have as what IB was being a good teacher. Some of it is pushed by the IB, particularly at that whole lab piece and the sorts of the questions they ask on the exams, but I also think it is teacher-dependent ultimately as well. You have teachers who can go and teach the course very much with this mentality that, "We're going to do really well in the exam. We're going to drill a lot.

We're going to cover this material and only do IB questions." Then, you have people more like me who I think I'm quite on the opposite end of the spectrum and I'm moving more to the opposite end of the spectrum where it's, "Let's learn the physics." If you have a good physics knowledge, then you will dwell on the exam and you will be able to apply your knowledge.

Interviewer: Are there any questions you have of me in terms of clarification, all the questions that I asked? Anything you wanted to add in general?

Teacher 3: I was thinking when you were commenting on the creating your own knowledge, I don't know if this is really relevant, but I'm going to say it anyway [laughs] because it popped into my head, that depending on how you teach-- I told you that I was doing this modeling instruction where you have kids do with inquiry. You basically set them up to do an experiment, and then they create their knowledge from that. It's not new knowledge, but in the sense, they are creating knowledge from the experience. Again, I don't really think the IB requires that, so I'm not really sure that that's relevant to your question. I thought of it as you were speaking [laughs].

Interviewer: Even the fact that it asks for IA work provides an opportunity for that to happen.

Teacher 3: Yes, exactly.

Interviewer: There's something there, yes, and in terms of how you bring it to life, it is going to be very teacher-dependent. Any questions or concerns in terms of what I might do with this information? I'm just making sure that you're clear. It'll be shared as part of the dissertation which is published publicly in the library, which technically means it could be

accessed by anyone. Your name won't be explicitly used in any way. I won't make a reference to your school. It should be the case that you're perfectly anonymous.

Teacher 3: That's fine with me.

Interviewer: Two things that I forgot. For where you are, roughly how many students are in each year of year one and year two of the diploma program?

Teacher 3: We have 19 students in year two and 31 in year one this year.

Interviewer: Only 19?

Teacher 3: Yes.

Interviewer: That's surprising. I would have guessed you have like 50 plus kids.

Teacher 3: Sorry, I'm thinking of my physics classes.

Interviewer: I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. Yes. sorry. My apologies.

Teacher 3: Yes. No wonder you're so surprised [laughs]. Sorry, I'm in physics mode. Let's see. I think the 12th-grade class is small this year. I want to say there's about 65 kids maybe. Then, the 11th grade is larger, and that's probably closer to 75 or 80, but I don't know the full numbers off the top of my head.

Interviewer: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. That takes us all the way through the questions.

Teacher 3: You're welcome. Good luck with the research.

Interviewer: Yes, thank you. It's fun. I'm enjoying it, which is good.

Teacher 3: Good.

Interviewer: Thank you, Teacher 3. Bye.

Teacher 3: Bye.

Interviewer: Take care.

Anonymized Interview Transcript – DP Coordinator 1 – March 2, 2020

Biographical Overview – DP Coordinator 1

Position: DP Coordinator / DP Physics Teacher

Years in Position: 6

Years Working with IBDP: 16

Number of Students in IBDP Program @ Current School: 100

Interviewer: In terms of an introduction, the dissertation investigates the impact of neoliberal educational reform on national school systems like in the UK or US and is looking into the implications the measures of accountability have on teaching and learning. The purpose is to ultimately test the degree to which the IBDP in international school schools is able to provide a similar level of accountability and then investigate the degree to which the IBDP provides a good education.

The first part of the interview is more focused and follows up on a few points raised from the questionnaire in terms of the accountability piece. Then the main part of the interview looks at the degree to which the IB Diploma Programme can bring to life or does bring to life in its design a good education. The questions get at elements of what a good education could be or could look like.

Anything I ask if you have any clarifying questions, ask away. I'm happy to obviously add detail or explain or expand anything you're needing explained or expanded. In total, it shouldn't take too long, around 45 minutes.

Please note that I am recording our conversation and will ultimately turn it into an anonymized transcript that will be submitted with the final dissertation. If there is anything you would not like recorded, please let me know.

DP Coordinator 1: I hope I say the right things!

Interviewer: The first question has to do with measures of accountability in the IB Diploma Programme. The framing question is, to what degree do you find that there is accountability in the IB Diploma Programme in providing true measures of assurance for the quality of teaching and learning? To what degree do you feel that as a parent who had a son go through or sons go through the program, did you feel like there were ways- or as a teacher teaching, were there ways to truly have some kind of check and balance for the overall quality?

DP Coordinator 1: I've never actually been a moderator of IAs or anything like that or an examiner, but obviously I've had a lot of my work moderated over the years and it's generally been pretty consistent. I've had one year where there were large discrepancies between the moderated work and my own, and comments that were different to previous years, even though I'd done the same kind of work as previous years and so things have changed since then. The IA has changed for the current syllabus and fit them into specifically physics. The structure of the IA has changed now so it's much more focused on the student's own work. So there's less comeback in terms of what the teacher has given them to do.

Interviewer: Okay.

DP Coordinator 1: I would say certainly the moderation process is much easier, and I think it's much fairer as well as a result.

Interviewer: I think I'm understanding it used to be the case that you had more latitude as a teacher to maybe set up what you did.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes.

Interviewer: And so at times, the feedback could be they are saying, okay, it's not about the student work, it's maybe moderating you in terms of choice of task, which made it harder for comparisons across kids' levels of achievement, if they were given, for example, a task that was more can do, yes, more or less conducive.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. Is it fair to say there's better accountability because they've given more rigidity?

DP Coordinator 1: Yes.

Interviewer: Or more structure?

DP Coordinator 1: Well, to the IA, there's less structure. It's one piece of work now that the student is fully in charge of. Whereas before-

Interviewer: On their own completely.

DP Coordinator 1: - on their own, yes. It has to be their idea. They have to run with it so that every idea is different. Whereas previously, the teacher would drive the practical scheme of work and pick a number of pieces of work out of that to be graded, and it would be a number of pieces of work as well so the student would have every opportunity to really score the highest marks. Whereas now, they've got-

Interviewer: One shot.

DP Coordinator 1: - one shot.

Interviewer: Didn't kids feel more pressured over that?

DP Coordinator 1: I think in the long run, they only have to produce one piece of work, whereas previously, they were producing multiple-- Now, everything we do towards that is formative, whereas previously, anything could have been summative. So, I think there's less pressure overall for them, and there's less judgment of the teacher when it comes to the moderation. It's more about the student, on what the student has produced.

Interviewer: Looking back as your role of DP coordinator, to what degree did you have confidence in terms of sharing with parents that the diploma program was a quality program? Were there things in the DP that you could draw upon to help reassure and help objectively as best you could give assurances of quality?

DP Coordinator 1: Yes, the IB is very clear on its statistics and statistical bulletins and things like that so you can see the rigor and how the rigor remains constant over year, number of years. You can compare your own school results to the IB's results. So, there's a lot there and there's a lot on their own website. The videos that they post are very informative. Very often you give a presentation, it's just purely based on any IB's videos. Also, things that we used to do an extended essay evening where the student would give a summary of their extended, and once they've completed their extended essay, they would give a summary of their extended lesson. It is a very formal evening.

And then get to talk about it afterwards. It's a celebration, so even those little celebrations can be very formal, and it gives the whole program a feel of quality. Being different in many ways to other academic programs can be a challenge.

Interviewer: For example, different than the A levels.

DP Coordinator 1: Different than in A levels, different in American systems AP and that kind of thing. The grading system is always a bone of contention.

Interviewer: It's a translating for parents [crosstalk]

DP Coordinator 1: Translating, yes.

Interviewer: Sorry. Great words.

DP Coordinator 1: No, it's fine. [laughs] But I think NYP is harder than the DP for parents to get their hands around, even though ultimately, it's the same grading system.

Interviewer: One of the things that came out of the questionnaire is the idea of the measures of accountability, primarily the exams, and the DP teachers feel pressure to get through content to cover hours. Based on your experiences teaching and also your experiences leaving teachers in the diploma program, to what degree did you note that those pressures limited your or your teacher's abilities to truly differentiate the kids who are in front of them or also to be innovative, to engage in teaching practices that were better suited to get kids to understand what they really needed to understand, not just hurt themselves with exam.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes, that is a big issue. In every school I've worked in, there's always been a lack of, not a lack of hours, but there's never been the required recommended number of hours for particularly teaching a higher level. I think teachers do feel under pressure then to just really say get through content, especially biology teachers, and maths, math high level. Then it tends to become lecture style very much.

I'll teach you this and I'll test you on it. I'll teach you this and I'll test you on it, just so that you know it, rather than what the IB is really wanting with the inquiry-based fit classroom, all of that kind of the real innovation. I think we get caught up in the time, the hours, and the pressure to get through, and we don't really sit back and think about how effective we're being by doing that.

My experience here, I've come up against almost the opposite problem where the students worry about it so much, that if you try to go down an inquiry-based route, they get very nervous, and they feel as though they're not making the progress that they should. They're not having the teach this, test on it, teach this, test on it route, and they have pushed back in some cases against that.

Interviewer: They're wanting the security of knowing that they're getting to where they needed to go.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes.

Interviewer: Is that structural within the diploma program? Or is it more contextual in terms of how schools bring it to life? Or maybe a bit of both.

DP Coordinator 1: What structure?

Interviewer: The idea of the limited time, there are high content demands. Is it the case that the IB in how it's purposefully developed puts that pressure on schools? Or is it how the schools, how parents, how kids within classes either backed with the diploma program is wanting or for some other reasons, get pushed into or get caught in that trap of teach, exam, teach, exam, teach, exam, just to get ready for their final exam?

DP Coordinator 1: I think it's a mixture of both. I can certainly say that the physics high level content can be taught within 240 hours. It can be taught within 220 hours. It can be taught within 200 hours. Likewise, I've taught the math syllabus SL, and taken 240 hours to do it.

Interviewer: Yes.

DP Coordinator 1: [laughs] Because the timetable structure that the school allowed for that. I don't know, I think we expand what we've got to do to fill the space available. Whether we do it, as well if there's less time, I'm not really convinced, but I think we've become less innovative if we're pressured with time, but there is also the international nature of our students put some of that pressure on because they do come from different systems, particularly into the DP, where they are more used to a much more prescribed lesson, and a much more structured approach to, I will teach you this, I will test you on this, kind of thing. So, the students get very nervous, some student if they've come from different systems in particular. Once they've gone through the NYP for a few years-

Interviewer: It's an easier transition.

DP Coordinator 1: - it's an easier transition, but then you also have teachers from different systems coming in to teach the DP as well. Unlike one is back into the NYP. And so, a lot of teachers will still teach in a more traditional way, which may suit their teaching style. They may teach their subject, but it's very difficult to innovate if no one else is innovating.

Interviewer: Yes. You get the critical mass. If you can't get there, you kind of get swaps.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes.

Interviewer: More on a reactive response, to what degree do you feel the diploma program prepares kids academically for success in university?

DP Coordinator 1: I think it's the best program I come up against for that, and it's not necessarily the subject-by-subject matter. It's all of the rest of it. It's encore. It's the TOK. It's extended essay in particular. I never had to write an essay at university, but if I had to, I'd struggle because I didn't do the IB. Yes, it's time management. It's all right. All of the great things about the IB diploma, I think that's its greatest strength, and in preparation for university, and we hear that from students when they come back particularly that first Christmas after they've been away.

Those students who hated the DP as they went through it, come back and say, well, how grateful they are to having done it. I've had that in a number of occasions with students.

Interviewer: What about some socially and emotionally, the degree to which the program prepares kids to be successful in university that allow them-- I guess a fair question is, does it, and then if so, to what degree and a bit of how?

DP Coordinator 1: Emotionally, in terms of time pressures and things like that and time management, it's great. In terms of this-

Interviewer: Are there social skills?

DP Coordinator 1: I guess that depends on the setting of the school that they're in more than the diploma program. The term program doesn't really focus too much on that, and if there is a big focus academically on work, then it can take away from us focusing on some of the social emotional skills that students need to go forward. So, it can, in that case, be a burden and overburdening on the students and their time in school. If we take every core block and give them TOK every block, then that time we could be working on social emotional skills as well.

Well, I guess it is partly because of the diploma program, because of the amount of work that needs to be done by students, but the diploma program itself doesn't really have anything, although the learner profile is all about that. There's nothing really built into the program specifically to target it.

Interviewer: As a measure, I'm leading-- [crosstalk]

DP Coordinator 1: ATL skills, yes.

Interviewer: One couldn't effectively gloss over the teaching of the ATL skill if you will-

DP Coordinator 1: Yes.

Interviewer: - and be driven by the exams. I think the core is evaluated. There's accountability. Will the learner profile be better integrated, or approaches for learning be

better integrated if in somehow, they were tested to the marginalized, because nobody really measures them?

DP Coordinator 1: I guess, yes. Like you say, it's easy to gloss over them, and I think many teachers certainly new to the diploma program may not even notice they're there.

Interviewer: Yes.

DP Coordinator 1: And likewise, with any TOK links to subjects, and for that kind of thing, the physics now will contain one or two TOKs now questions within the physics. So maybe if there were or was some kind of assessment of the ATL skill with it. Some of that was actually built into the old science internal assessment in the group for projects so that personal skills were evaluated during the group for [unintelligible 00:16:54] had gone by the wayside now.

Interviewer: And you mentioned the idea earlier in terms of kids being prepared socially in terms of their abilities to manage time, to manage the time pressures and time management. Is that a nice secondary benefit of going through the program? Or do you think there's something purposeful in the design of the diploma program, so to not overburden, but demand a lot of kids so they learn time management? Or is it kind of sink or swim? How purposeful do you think that the development [crosstalk]?

DP Coordinator 1: It's embedded in the ATL skills, so it is there.

Interviewer: Okay.

DP Coordinator 1: But we're looking to the schools individually to develop those skills within the students. Again, there's no subject within the DP where that is taught, but it's expected that schools will develop that because of the ATL skills. Again, it's a bolt on by the school. Different schools do it in different ways-

Interviewer: Or sometimes not at all.

DP Coordinator 1: - or sometimes not at all, and then you are sink or swim. Yes, some of our students will think they're thinking when they're actually swimming.

Interviewer: Yes.

DP Coordinator 1: And they're just about keeping their heads above water.

Interviewer: And then they realize the other hint a year after.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes.

Interviewer: But you learn how to swim.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes. That's one of the downfalls of the program is that the students don't realize themselves the true benefit of it until they reflect on it years later.

Interviewer: Yes, and this is just a reaction, and maybe that could be one of its strengths. Yes, I don't know.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes, although it does tend to then lead to negative comments by students-

Interviewer: In the here and now.

DP Coordinator 1: - in the here and now, but also teachers as well. Teachers will refer to it as being difficult and hard.

Interviewer: You need a bit more realization on the goal to help spirits which is important.

DP Coordinator 1: It's very difficult for students to think that far ahead as well.

Interviewer: And teachers.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes.

Interviewer: And organizations.

DP Coordinator 1: We can tell the students that this will benefit you when you get to university.

Interviewer: [unintelligible 00:19:37] Saturday night.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes, developing their social skill.

Interviewer: Okay. Now, a shift to the second part. Looking at elements of a good education, so the questions are geared to different criteria. The first of which is looking at students becoming independent.

I guess exercising agency in their learning to be active participants of rather than being objects to whom or in whom we pour learning. To your experiences or based on your experiences on what you've seen, to what degree is the IB Diploma Program purposefully built to empower kids to be agents of their learning? To be independent? To be full participants in their learning?

DP Coordinator 1: There's many aspects to each course and their program as a whole where students have choice in what they do and it's becoming more so. We've already spoken about the science IAs rather than doing prescribed there are-- There's choice in what the students do. We had a big push for agency in our last school and it was a push against the IB. I did a few little calculations of how much of the diploma program in terms of percentage of the 45 points is available from student agency.

Depending on the subjects they chose, if you choose art, for example, visual art, then really, you're determining your entire course. Your entire course is based on non-traditional exam work. Your extended essay, it's entirely their choice. TOK presentation entirely their choice. TOK essay, okay, you've got a choice from six titles.

Interviewer: But they're pretty broad?

DP Coordinator 1: They're pretty broad. You can even go in many different ways. Maths exploration, it's your own choice. I think it was up to about 50% if you chose certain courses. Up to 50% of the 45 points were available for work that the student had control over. If you went down the more scientific route, it wasn't quite that high. There is agency already built-in and that has improved in the time I've been teaching it.

I think the onus really is for the rest of the learning, the traditional content. The onus is really on teachers to understand a bit better the approaches to teaching that are within the IB program, trying to get true IB teachers teaching using inquiry, using flip classroom models, using things that actually allow students to develop the independence. Like we said before, the time pressures tend to restrict us, or they tend to make teachers feel restricted in terms of how they approach the content.

Interviewer: Programmatically, it seems like the design is there to allow for inquiry-driven student-driven teaching and therefore learning and how it comes to pass is somewhat contextual in terms of how the teachers respond?

DP Coordinator 1: Yes.

Interviewer: His name-- They guy's name is Druid Biesta. He's an educational philosopher who's framed some key criteria in terms of what a good education ought to be. One of his ideas is the idea that a good education is one that engages in the pedagogy of disruption. In essence, it's kind of like an icepick to the brain. It jolts kids to challenge their regular ways of being, seeing and doing internally. Also, challenge the regular ways of their communities, be it their physics class or their school or society at large. Getting kids to points of slight discomfort to see things ultimately in a new frame.

To what degree do you feel, or have you sensed, or have you seen the diploma program purposeful in that in its design in terms of getting kids to jog kids out of their status quo, if you will?

DP Coordinator 1: Well, in TOK is the biggest part of that. That's really what it's all about. Sometimes I wonder whether, as a TOK teacher, whether we get some kind of buzz from making students feel that way. I'd like to see his research, to see what real benefit that has. I mean physics is the same. Physics is all the time challenging the way people think, the way people speak, the way about the world around them. It's difficult to get through that confusion.

It's almost like they've had 16 years of blur and then all over sudden somebody has turned around and told them everything they thought was wrong. That confusion--I actually talk about it with the students, and the way I describe it is it's like watching a grade six soccer game. You've got students in grade five and you're playing a game of soccer. There's seven sides and 14 players on the pitch. If you watch the game, you've got 14 players all around the ball and they are moving around this little circle with the ball somewhere in the middle, eventually all 14 players kind of end up in the goal the ball goes with them. Nobody really knows who scored.

Then they get into middle school and they're in grade six and their PE lessons or their football coaching, they're learning to pass, to make space, to move and you put them into the game situation. Immediately you've got 14 players around the ball and the ball is moving around the pitch in a circle and eventually ends up in the goal and nobody knows who scored. It's that reverting to familiarity that I find so often in exams when the students are going through that period of confusion.

Interviewer: How to push them through to the other side.

DP Coordinator 1: How to push them through that confusion, whether two years is long enough, I'm not sure, whether it's the right time to do it, or whether we need to try and avoid the confusion in the first place. A simple thing would be taking physics, gravitational field strength of the earth. If we were doing GCSE physics, I would have to teach the students that the gravitational field strength of the earth is 10N/Kg , they get into grade 11 and it's now 9.81 , not 10 .

Interviewer: Okay.

DP Coordinator 1: But for what purpose? It's just that little bit of confusion when it was 10 , now it's 9.81 , which one do I use?

Interviewer: Is it going to change again?

DP Coordinator 1: Is it going to change again? The same with the equation for speed. They learn in lower down school speed is distance over time. It's not. That's average speed, and the word average makes a huge difference when they get into grade 11, but we still teach that speed is distance over time and I've seen it in the mock exams I'm marking right now with grade 12, speed is distance over time in an inappropriate place.

But it's that reverting back to what they're comfortable with, so I don't know whether we do them a dis-service by making things easier earlier on, I know we're getting sidetracked here, but or whether the confusion is good. I'm not sure. But if they haven't got through that confusion by this stage in grade 12, that's a concern.

Interviewer: Yes, because things will be fairly solidified. Now, reverting back is going to be stuck. Any other examples in terms of potential ways in which students' ways of being or doing or thinking are challenged? TOK, you mentioned some physics.

DP Coordinator 1: TOK physics.

Interviewer: Yes, A, I think it could be something in terms of maybe the kids having a choice in terms of having to move forward.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes, that's another challenge, the extended essay. Depending on what research they find, during their extended essay could challenge their preconceived ideas. I guess any of the subjects will have an element of that.

Interviewer: Anything in the exams that allows for that?

DP Coordinator 1: I don't think so. I think the exams-- because in effect, by challenging something like that, you're almost introducing new knowledge. I don't mean that would be the purpose of an exam. We could talk about the purpose of exams [laughs] and whether we should have them or not. That's where the diploma program struggles because it's trying to bridge that gap to universities, and it's trying to meet the university's needs of a rigorous

program and that is seen by the universities, is requiring exams, whereas, realistically that goes against the IB philosophy in many respects.

Yes, I don't think that would be the place for it. I guess CAS is going to challenge, particularly, some of the service element of CAS. Some of our students, grades 11th, last week, their eyes opened working at a local school.

Interviewer: Despite it being a new experience, [crosstalk].

DP Coordinator 1: Yes, new experience. I've seen students in similar situations, at our previous schools, just burst into tears, just because it's something so different.

Interviewer: Another one of the criteria is, good education is one that's meant to get kids to become critically aware of themselves and also critically aware of the societies that they're living in. Different than the idea of disruption, they're just teaching them to become self-reflective or reflective of the communities in which they're living. Are there elements in the diploma program that empower kids or expect kids to develop those skills of self-reflection and reflection on others?

DP Coordinator 1: Yes, reflection has been a huge part of the modern DP [inaudible 00:32:43] with the cast, especially, but also within the essays, within the IAs that's built into the maths exploration. Evaluation within science has always been a reflective process. I think in some ways, it's got to the point now, where it's focused on so much, particularly in CAS, that it is seen as being another reflection. Again, it's trying to come up with the innovative ways of doing that within class, within CAS-

Interviewer: Without turning kids off.

DP Coordinator 1: - without turning kids off, so they really see the benefit of the reflection. I guess, to some degree, the external exams are the reflection. Looking back on the knowledge and skills that you've developed over the two years.

Interviewer: Anything in regard to the arts, in terms of that reflective piece?

DP Coordinator 1: Again, a lot of that's built into the coursework anyways, the internal, external assessments that are there, the director's notebook, and that kind of thing, a lot of that's value reflective. Theater and art. Then the IA, generally, across the board provides their reflection.

Interviewer: Connected to that, one is engaging kids so that they are critically reflecting. The second part is, is the DP purposeful in terms of getting kids to act upon that, to use agencies to make change, be it in the math IA work, be it in the lab reports that they're doing, be it in the arts? Or rather is there something purposeful in the design of the program to get kids out and actually doing something based upon what they're coming to realize?

DP Coordinator 1: Not so much in the IAs from that respect. There is the idea of submission of a draft and receiving feedback from somebody else which can be reflected upon and then acted upon. That's not necessarily self-reflect, but it's reflecting on someone else's comments within CAS, the reflective exercise is supposed to take place before, during, and after. The reflections before would influence how the project develops. The reflection during can then actually affect the final outcome. Yes, it's certainly built into that.

The schools we advise setting reports by giving reports, by giving grades at various stages or the meanings behind those grades and feedback throughout. We're providing opportunity for students to reflect on their progress as they go along. The mock exam for example.

Interviewer: The last two questions. The connected, the first one, it looks to the idea of a good education asking, requiring, getting kids to engage in and learn how to engage in higher-order thinking skills, evaluation, synthesis, analysis, moving beyond just application are the ways in which-- or to what degree is the DP purposeful in expecting and putting kids into situations where they need to develop those skills and exercise those skills that of higher order [inaudible 00:37:06]?

DP Coordinator 1: Again, speaking from the physics, well the science perspective, it's certainly up to evaluation and analysis that's built into the curriculum. It's part of the IA. It's part of paper three, and now it's built-in their other subjects. Maths, you've got that in the exploration. When you get to things like being creative, I think that's difficult for the IB to build anything even specifically. If we were truly working as inquiry-based teachers, then I think some of that would come through. Again, the evaluation, the analysis, all of that would come with inquiry-based teaching practices if done well.

Interviewer: For paper three and physics, would you mind speaking a little bit more? I know a little bit about that but I'm not sure Paper three.

DP Coordinator 1: Paper three physics and chemistry and to some extent, biology. It's in two sections. The first section, section A is data analysis question. They'll be given some results from a practical investigation. They'll have to analyze it in some way and even evaluate. It's actually built into the exam. That would be 15 marks from that paper out of depending on which paper, about 60.

Interviewer: Okay. Significant portion.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes.

Interviewer: Other reason which the diploma program expects or [unintelligible 00:39:26] higher-order thinking skills in kids?

DP Coordinator 1: I suppose CAS requires, and even the reflections within CAS, that's really evaluating what went on. TOK you got analysis. I didn't know the different types of analysis in different subjects, textual analysis and English and languages, history, economics [unintelligible 00:40:06] Visual art.

Interviewer: Arts, okay.

DP Coordinator 1: Just naming subjects here.

[laughter]

Interviewer: The last part is connected to this. It's the idea that a good education is one that one teaches kids how to acquire and use higher-order thinking skills, but then goes specifically further and purposefully further in terms of getting kids to create knowledge. It's good to analyse and synthesize what's there, but to do so in ways that are new and novel. Knowledge creation isn't necessarily coming up with brand new unified theory of physics but for 17, 18-year-old kids, is it fair to say to what degree does the diploma program ask them, want them or expect them to jump into creation of knowledge.

DP Coordinator 1: I think the extend essay is the bog one for that. That's actually where a lot of our students struggle coming up with an idea for their extended essay. It's very easy for them to come up with a very linear and descriptive piece of work on something that somebody already knows that's pulling in that primary research along with secondary research. Putting the two together and coming up with something novel is the struggle, but that's really the purpose.

That's built into the diploma program as part of the extended essay. Likewise, some of the investigations, the science investigations. The idea is that they do something beyond the practicals that they have done throughout the course of the subject. It may be taking what they've done but taking it a step further. Doing the Hooke's law experiment on a spring versus doing the Hooke's law experiment on their curly afro hair, which presents different challenges and gives a very different result. Sometimes students will do something that hasn't been done before in those contexts, which is interesting.

Interviewer: The program allows for that time? If you try something new but not necessarily succeed, it's not helping them in some terms of their ability to perform on a test.

DP Coordinator 1: No, particularly with the IA, it's not about the results they get. It's how they interpret the results that they've got and how they evaluate that critical analysis of their

own method of their results, of their hypothesis, and what would we do better next time, so the reflection on that as well.

Interviewer: Any question that you have based upon the questions I shot at you?

DP Coordinator 1: [laughs] You're focusing predominantly on the DP rather than the MIPD.

Interviewer: Yes. For the moment just that last year, that closing program because I think the idea-- Sorry, can I ask two questions?

DP Coordinator 1: Yes.

Interviewer: Before I forget, [unintelligible 00:43:33] have forgotten. How many years have you taught in the DP?

DP Coordinator 1: This is my thirteenth, so 12 full years.

Interviewer: Okay. Sorry. [unintelligible 00:43:42]. I thought he was going on in the US and UK in terms of strong drives for accountability that came from this kind of neo-liberal economic movements and found their ways into education. People want to guarantee results, they want to guarantee resources if are being used efficiently. So, it gets boiled down into, I think in the US and UK, the lowest common denominator that isn't great.

Whereas with the diploma program, I think there's accountability, universities trust in it and at the same time it seems like it's somewhat better than offering an AP system or A levels or that which is all over the national systems. It's the idea of getting ready for universities to send out screen, how can they have confidence in the results and at the same time, hopefully, teach if you will to have a bit better of a test. Then looking into [unintelligible 00:44:33] It's just a sausage. It's a little fancier package, but it's still just a sausage. We're grinder the kids out of this slightly fancier grinder.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes, but I think one of the big differences for me with the DP which really brings it home for me as to how rigorous it really is the criteria reference to nature of the assessments as opposed to being non-referenced. In the UK with A levels, you could have as many people as you want getting an A star because they adjust people's marks accordingly and then set the boundaries. The boundaries are the same every year, but people's marks get adjusted and so you could make the government look good by having more people get A stars each year by just shifting how much you shift people's marks. Whereas, the criterion referenced IB program, you've got set standards.

If you meet that standard, then that is the grade you've got. That stays the same, which means grade boundaries changes here. At least you know what you have achieved or actually did that. I tried to explain that to somebody at the last school by pulling out the results from a student. I used the grade descriptors to actually write as if I was writing a university recommendation for that student, highlighting the skills that they developed over their time at the school. It was actually a quite a plausible recommendation and say that this isn't just a sausage factory. This is a real person. This is what this person had learned throughout their time- [crosstalk].

Interviewer: [unintelligible 00:46:38].

DP Coordinator 1: Yes, and difference of-- Yes, I didn't know let's put it that they might have got a four in maths and so I pulled out a descriptor and tweaked it a little bit. You actually built up a profile of that student, as opposed to they got a B in this and a C in that then that means they got this percentage on an exam.

Interviewer: Yes. In that design and in that being on referenced, it does boil then to an A star versus A, a five versus a four on an AP scale.

DP Coordinator 1: I think that for me is the real rigor, is that somebody who gets a six this year, has developed the same skills as somebody who got a six five years ago.

Interviewer: Yes, and met that bar.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes. As I can't say that very levels.

Interviewer: Yes. Lots of it is contextual it seems. Well, actually not versus are not just my two bits. I think coming out of this, I think so much of it is contextual in terms of how we bring the program to life via the MIP via the DP. It is the case that we can celebrate a student with 24 just as much as student with 45.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes, that's true. It's hard though. It's as hard as teachers when you are the physics teacher, and the results are published. In the school I came from, they'll publish in the annual general report and there's a big [unintelligible 00:48:06] thing and they were the first things message from director, message from board, DP results.

Interviewer: Their narratives were shaped.

DP Coordinator 1: I've always had that right, even my A-level results when I was in the UK, we're always published in there. We felt they were published in the newspaper.

Interviewer: Yes, lead tables in the UK and funding.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes. We can and the diploma program allows us for us to paint different stories and to measure success in broader sense of that. I think the diploma program in this design is pushing. I think we as schools twist it to adjust the number or percentage of kids who are 38 plus points or bonus points or what for.

Interviewer: I remember my first year of teaching A-level or is my second year teaching but my first year in Barnsley college. The head of the sixth form came up to me in the end. I taught two courses. I taught physics and electronics. The head of the sixth form came up to me at the end of the results day and said, "Congratulations, all your physics students passed." My electronics students, one student failed, so the fail is less than an E.

I was actually more pleased with my electronics results than my physics result because with those electronics students who were 11 of them, the one who failed had not taken my advice about resetting exams. Actually, he was a farmer. He was just doing electronics so that he could actually be more practical on his farm when he went back to helping his dad on his farm. Richard Battersby did physics. He needed at least a B in physics, he got a C because he wanted to do veterinary medicine.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes, it wasn't just about the results. It was the story behind that.

Interviewer: Who they were? Why they were?

DP Coordinator 1: Who they were? Where they're going? Did all of my electronics students get what they needed for the next stage in their life, yes, they did. Did my Physics students? No, which [unintelligible 00:50:19] a year later, he got an A. He's now a vet. How do we judge our success? Do we use value added, do we use the Math scores?

Interviewer: All of those.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes. [laughs]

Interviewer: On the one extreme, it's not great in terms of just an A star, or just a number, and the other extreme, well, each of us things we're probably doing very well, and so trust me, and that was the measure many national school systems in the '70s that lead to this radical reform, because well-- the [unintelligible 00:50:57] in education system is strong but my PE teacher who was also the PE teacher of my sister was a raging alcoholic, and in his world he was fun [laughs] and we probably shouldn't have relied upon his opinion. It's a tricky balance. It's a really hard balance to strike.

DP Coordinator 1: Yes, a little bit statistical significance. When you are really below the world average, or is this statistically significant result? No, it's not because we only got 12 students. How much do people read into it if you're-- the world average is 4.1, and yours is 4.0, or your average is 7.0 but you only have one student. [laughs]

Interviewer: Yes, or it's French ab initio and they're all made of French students. [chuckles]

DP Coordinator 1: Yes. [laughs] You cheated.

Interviewer: Yes. I need to say thank you very much. Your time is very much appreciated. I need to say that I'm going to be rude, because I've got a meeting that I need to go to.
[crosstalk]

DP Coordinator 1: No, [laughs] it's not being rude. [laughs]

Interviewer: Thank you, thank you, thank you.

DP Coordinator 1: It's okay.

Interviewer: It's much very appreciated.

Anonymized Interview Transcript – DP Coordinator 2 – February 13, 2020

Biographical Overview – DP Coordinator 2

Position: DP Coordinator

Years in Position: 14

Years Working with IBDP: 25

Number of Students in IBDP Program @ Current School: 400

Interviewer: In terms of an introduction, the dissertation investigates the impact of neoliberal educational reform on national school systems like in the UK or US and is looking into the implications the measures of accountability have on teaching and learning. The purpose is to ultimately test the degree to which the IBDP in international school schools is able to provide a similar level of accountability and then investigate the degree to which the IBDP provides a good education.

The first part of the interview is more focused and follows up on a few points raised from the questionnaire in terms of the accountability piece. Then the main part of the interview looks at the degree to which the IB Diploma Programme can bring to life or does bring to life in its design a good education. The questions get at elements of what a good education could be or could look like.

Anything I ask if you have any clarifying questions, ask away. I'm happy to obviously add detail or explain or expand anything you're needing explained or expanded. In total, it shouldn't take too long, around 45 minutes.

Please note that I am recording our conversation and will ultimately turn it into an anonymized transcript that will be submitted with the final dissertation. If there is anything you would not like recorded, please let me know.

DP Coordinator 2: I am okay with you recording this.

Interviewer: The first question has to do with measures of accountability in the IB Diploma Programme. The framing question is, to what degree do you find that there is accountability in the IB Diploma Programme in providing true measures of assurance for the quality of teaching and learning? To what degree do you feel that as a parent who had a son go through or sons go through the program, did you feel like there were ways- or as a teacher teaching, were there ways to truly have some kind of check and balance for the overall quality?

DP Coordinator 2: I think I've already hinted, the fact that it is the IB itself and the diploma itself is held accountable to external factors such as colleges, representations at government level, they validate all other things that is done within the IB, holds itself accountable and then that accountability is then passed on down to schools.

In a sense, you have a chain of accountability that moves from external providers who the IB and moving towards or students with IB move towards, be that government or college, all the way down into the classroom via the school administration, via me as IB coordinator, down to teachers down to students.

That chain is, in a sense, works well unbroken and everyone works toward the same standard and no standards are externally set, and those standards are all automatically moved down to the student.

Interviewer: Any examples? Obviously, I mentioned the exams, any other examples in terms of what those accountability pieces are? Any other ways in which you can, I guess, maybe put some detail to what the chain links are?

DP Coordinator 2: You're breaking up just a little bit so hopefully you can still hear me.

Interviewer: Yes, I can hear you.

DP Coordinator 2: Cool. I think it works in a couple of different ways. The first is teacher accountability. Teachers, as an institution, every one of your teachers must be trained to a given level in order to deliver the program. Standards of practice of the IB force you as an institution to make your teachers or move your teachers to a level or a place that means they are effectively able to deliver the program.

The standards and the practices also force you as an institution to behave in line with the set of protocols that are set by IB and are accepted by all other schools once you sign on to and pay the bill to the IB to become part of that process. Every five years, you have your evaluation to make sure that those things are ongoing. It's not just a one-off, you go in and you check the box, pay the money. You must make sure that's an ongoing process.

The other thing is you are forced to self-reflect. Part of that process is you become internally accountable rather than externally accountable to your own standard which needs to align with the IB. You set up your own mission, your own policies, and the IB accreditation forces you to implement those policies in alignment with the IB but they're in your own context. You set up an assessment policy that aligns with the IB but then forces you as an institution to be held accountable to the parent community, to the students, to all stakeholders to say, "This is how we assess. These are the things we see as acceptable or unacceptable." If a teacher moves beyond that realm of acceptability, it's up to the school to bring them back into the fold in some way or remove him completely in the worst-case scenario.

Interviewer: Thank you. The accountability measures that are there, and you've spoken to a little bit completely in terms of what they are. How restrictive do they seem? One of the drawbacks, for example, of the UK or US national systems is that teachers are so pushed into teaching to the test that they don't have any wiggle room if you will, to what degree do you think is a DP teacher/teachers can actually differentiate to the kids who are in front of them or to what degree?

DP Coordinator 2: Terms? I told you they are that restrictive. I think philosophically, if you were to just read the mission, vision, and standards and practices of the IB, there's a lot of open interpretation for any given school or cultural context to deliver the program.

I think where it hits the road, if you like, in the classroom or classroom teacher, you are very, I would imagine, far more conscious of the realities of that in a classroom which are far more assessment-driven, you have the idea of national curriculums or exams in the UK or Canada or US. The IB isn't that far removed from that.

The idea in the diploma the reality is it's still an exam-driven program. It's still a program with very significant content which you are prescribed to deliver. I mean, in some places, you have some flexibility and option, but the majority of that curriculum is externally derived. You have a very limited amount of time in which to do so.

Even though philosophically it says the notion is that you have a lot of freedom in terms of how you deliver that, the reality is that that is very much constrained by time, exam, assessment.

If you were to approach in a very open-ended free manner, I think at the end of the day, your chance of success would diminish and then accountability would backfire from a different perspective which is, yes, I've done what the IB said, I've done it according to their philosophy of inquiry and open-ended learning and all the various ways of encouraging. But at the end of the day, you've got parent accountability and college accountability and school accountability that says, "Yes, it's all very well. We've had a wonderful experience in your French class for the last two years, but no one's passed anything."

I realize that for most people that the reality lies between those two extremes but there's no doubt that the external pressures of the IB force the level of accountability that I think teachers genuinely feel. I mean, I think if you were to ask most teachers, they do feel that weight of expectation and accountability that comes with the IB diploma.

Interviewer: Do you think the average teacher, to what degree is it fair to say that most teachers can still come to know their kids and at least to some degree, make sufficient differences so that they're not just teaching one thing to everybody the exact same way, how rigid?

DP Coordinator 2: I think [unintelligible 00:08:35] that the two. I don't believe that the two things are mutually exclusive. I don't think the fact that you have a time pressure and external exam pressure that everyone's been held to, that doesn't mean that you shouldn't be spending time getting to know your students and knowing them as learners and differentiate on their behalf.

The reality is you rarely get to succeed with your end goal if you do that. The two not only are they not mutually exclusive, they mutually necessitate. I think maybe it's a better way to look at it. You are going to achieve, and I think anyone in education knows that you're going to achieve better if you know your students, you know their strengths, you know their weakness if you teach to them as individuals.

You don't teach to them just as a mass of humanities in front of you in your economics class, for example. Accountability here it's not just as simple as they need to do well in the test.

Yes, you want them to do well in the test but in order to do well in the test, it means you need to embrace these other maybe softer skills of humanity and engagement and knowing of your students.

Interviewer: To what degree do you think teachers can take risks in terms of trying at least some innovative strategies? Is there some flexibility to go above and beyond and engage a little bit more in some inquiry-driven methods or is it just all teacher talk, teacher talk, teacher talk?

DP Coordinator 2: Quite the opposite. I think if it was just teacher talk, teacher talk, teacher talk, it'll be ineffective anyway. I think as a teacher, you might fall into a trap of this is the most efficient way for me to get this information across in a timely manner so that it comes back in the exam, but that three-stage process, part of that is yes, people absorbing information.

We know that people absorb information best in a multitude of ways, so there's no singular good way to get information across. Then you're going to have the storage of that information. It's got to be kept and then you've got the retrieval and the retrieval practice to bring it back. Those three steps aren't going to be effectively achieved just through a teacher going through at a hundred miles an hour at the front of a room, racing through a curriculum. That's not going to meet the needs of everyone in the room and nor is it going to achieve great success at the end of it. Then you're going to have to differentiate based on the needs of

your students, but you've also got to build in a variety of skills that enable students to store, retrieve, use, utilize, revisit, manipulate the information that you're giving to them.

Because at the end of the day, the exam, you talking about the IB diploma, it's not just a recall exam, it's not just a fact-based here, learn these facts, bring them back. Almost every exam you're talking about involves the manipulation of, the evaluation of, the discussion in relation to data and validity of things is, and those types of thinking can't be just drilled into a student under a time pressure, a didactic person at the front giving information.

If you aid a successful teacher, I think in the IB, you're going to go and see a whole range of things taking place. What would be the first thing you're going to see is that they actually talk to their students and know their students, and their students talk to them. That's probably in stage one.

I think any teacher who ignores that process of getting to know your students at the expense because they feel they're under pressure to get through a chemistry curriculum is ultimately doomed to fail.

Interviewer: Yes. Which is nice because then the accountability measure at the end of the exam is going to point that out and either force change or force the person out.

DP Coordinator 2: Yes. Well, I think so. It sounds like a fairly brutal approach to it, but fundamentally, yes.

Interviewer: Maybe a shorter answer here. To what degree do you feel the DP prepares kids for success in university at an academic level?

DP Coordinator 2: Very much, I think. Compared to other curricular, more than any other that I'm aware of because you are forced to do a whole host of higher-order thinking activities that will reflect what takes place in college. An extended let's say for example, in research or theory of knowledge and the idea that you need to evaluate knowledge and discuss knowledge and not just be a passive recipient.

Interviewer: Then what about, [crosstalk] I'm sorry, go ahead.

DP Coordinator 2: I was going to say, I think that's reflected. The IB released all their research data that comes out in terms of various outcomes and studies. Vancouver, there's one in Southeast Asia in the UK every year we use those and [unintelligible 00:13:23] pre-college curriculum. The IB kids seem to do much better, almost all.

Interviewer: What about socially? In terms of social integration into university? To what degree is the diploma program effective?

DP Coordinator 2: It's a really difficult question to answer, isn't it?

Interviewer: Yes.

DP Coordinator 2: I think that's really difficult to answer because I think you can't really extract the diploma program from the school culture. I think the diploma program itself is only after a student leaves our school and goes to college, they've been through diploma program, great. They're intellectually prepared. They're essentially prepared by that and their experience at high school, which goes way beyond just the academic program. I think to isolate the IB--

Interviewer: [crosstalk] come back.

DP Coordinator 2: [inaudible 00:14:23]

Interviewer: No, good. I'm good, I'm good.

DP Coordinator 2: In terms of isolating the IB, I think it would be very difficult to draw a conclusion about social success in college.

Saying that, I think that the way that you are encouraged to learn in the IB does necessitate social engagement. It does necessitate [unintelligible 00:14:48] negotiation. It does necessitate presentation and discussion, and those are all good social skills that transfer way beyond the IB classroom. I think it would be a hell of a leap to say, "If you've done the IB diploma, you're going to be more socially successful in college."

I think there'd be tons of people who are socially successfully in college who didn't do the IB and vice versa. I think there are kids who do IB diploma who get 45 points and that's fantastic, but they're socially not totally set up to go to college and thrive in a social environment.

Interviewer: Yes. How does the learner profile fit in there in terms of that social preparation, or does it?

DP Coordinator 2: I was thinking about this today, coincidentally. I don't know what that says about me, but I was thinking about this today. I think in PYP and MYP, it's very clear that the learner profile has a fairly deterministic factor within the way the curriculum is built and the way the curriculum is developed. It's almost impossible I think to deliver the PYP or the MYP without the learner profile being a part of that program and that process.

I think the reality is, here is the word, I think it's a philosophical adjunct. In the IB diploma, it's often just off to the left. It's all from the left. People that might be little post drop it in a classroom or in a full way with the learner profile attributes, but I think from my experience and going into most classrooms at a diploma level, it's almost an afterthought.

It's something that almost gets rolled out during your evaluation stage and say, "Where do we address the learner profile? Oh, here and here." I don't think it's used from an IB perspective; it's meant to be at the core. It's meant to be there at the central of what takes place, but I think as you move up through the programs to the deployment, it moves further and further away from the core in reality.

I think it's very easy for a school to deliver the diploma program and almost not to look back on a profile at all and still be relatively successful as a school, even though from a philosophical perspective, they would not meet their obligations to the IB really.

Interviewer: Yes. I think it's okay that I comment here. I can strike this from the official record. I think one of the things that happens is that maybe TOK takes maybe more paramount importance than the idea of we're going to come to see ourselves and the world through the lenses of the subject rather than those more broader dispositional attributes. I'm going to be more of a scientist seeing the world as a physicist sees it compared to something else. It's a tricky one.

DP Coordinator 2: Well, I think because I was doing the upscaling for the TOK workshop leader and one of the key things they've done with the new core unit in TOK is they've now explicitly aligned it with the learner profile.

The IB have identified, I was talking about this online, is there is in every one of the subject guides the learner profile is mentioned but there is no explicit mention in the curriculum itself of where that would come into place. It's very easy for a teacher just to remain, as you say, in their physics world, teaching physics and having no clear link to the learner profile unless they choose to do it.

Whereas now in TOK, you're now in the new core, you must use the learner profile as your mechanism of investigation. You have some freedom, but the learner profile is now part of that course design. I think it's the first place in any diploma course that is explicitly saying you must use the learner profile in this course.

Interviewer: Yes. The link of ethics all the way through could be a way to draw some of those elements out anyhow.

DP Coordinator 2: I can say in the past, you could ignore ethics if you really wanted to. It would be foolish, but you could and now you cannot. That's cool.

Interviewer: I think it's a good way to live life.

DP Coordinator 2: [laughs] Yes. As you said, the CEO Donald Trump tries again. You will sleep well at night.

Interviewer: [laughs] Until you're shot. [crosstalk] The second part is getting to an element of I guess what I'm trying to bring to life from the paper of what a good education is. I think

like in the US and the UK in a national curriculum, they'll give you content, they'll give you skills, you can get through an exam, you can pass and be prepared at that level, but to be engaged in a good education, it's asking for something a little bit more.

The questions are trying to find out the degree to which that's something more is present in the IB diploma program. One of the key pieces of the idea of students being subjects in the learning to be not just independent in terms of it's put onto the kids, but for them to have agency, for them to have some direction in terms of what and how they're learning.

I guess there's a good starting point to like your experience, obviously teaching the class and then running the diploma program at your school. To what degree do you, or have you seen kids truly as independent, active learners who have agency in what they're doing? How have you seen it? I guess, more importantly, are there ways in which the diploma program brings that to life?

You and your classroom, you would have done that no matter where you're teaching. You could have been teaching in AP school in Maine, and you'd still do that. Are the ways in which the IB formally helps that come to pass?

DP Coordinator 2: It's a really difficult question. I would like to think it does. I think the approach that the IB encourages, is that students become agents. As you say, the idea of agency or control over their own learning is there. If you're a school, a successful school would be encouraging that.

Now, that you mentioned the idea. Is that explicitly part of the IB? I think it's more one of those unwritten rules, maybe, of the IB. An expectation that exists behind the language of standards and practices and they would think that yes, students are not just mere vessels of information. They are not just there as passive recipients being dictated to by the school or by a teacher.

Can I see that? I think so. I think if you were to look at students going through the IB Diploma. It's a little bit difficult to differentiate between what is just natural maturation from kids going through grade 9 to grade 12, maybe. I think that is students who are involved in a diploma are forced to make decisions of academic importance, but also social importance.

There are lots of things in there that they are encouraged to do.

An obvious place to go is probably CAS. I do think CAS, they are forced for a very good reason to engage with communities and with people or events beyond their normal existence. Though as themselves, they have agency, they have freedom in what they do and how they go about that, to a great degree. Their agency and whether that will come to the project is whether or not they're involved in long term or something they just dip their toe into.

It's undoubtedly a place that forces students and that's not prevalent in other programs that forces them beyond the classroom as mere vessels of information. That would be one.

I think the second is, that the idea of doing TOK is in a sense, you're forcing independence of thought. There's no way that you can really exist and thrive in TOK without some independence of thought. No teacher is going to stand at the front of a TOK classroom and just bombard you with facts. That's not how it's going to work. There's going to be agency there, in terms of freedom of thought. There is also agency in how you approach the course. You choose where you want people focused for your presentation or where you want to focus in terms of your essay and engagement [inaudible 00:23:27] plenty agency there.

If you do an essay, I believe that you choose what you do with it. You choose your topic.

You choose where you go with it. You choose how it works and what your research. All those core elements are all places that encourage student agency in slightly different forms.

I think even to add to that, it's not just agency itself. It's the ability to reflect the former agency. All of those force you not just to do this passively and just ride the wave of CAS and hope [unintelligible 00:24:04] does something interesting. You're forced to stop and think

and reflect and act again and think yes, that went well, this didn't go well, I need to do this. What about that, or maybe I'll get involved in this.

All of those things are, we've seen what was very good social outcomes for an individual. These are character traits we want to develop in people going forth into the world. Most aren't doing those things. They see those as things to be done by a school according to their mission and however they choose to do that. Whereas the IB Diploma says, no, you are accountable to this, you must complete these things.

That's quite a nice balance of, you know, dictatorial, authoritarian. You must do X, but enough freedom for you to do X in a whole multitude of ways that gives you the freedom to explore it in whatever way works for you. Am I making sense?

Interviewer: Yes. Any ways in which you see it in terms of classes? In terms of classes, any ways in which giving to that test and the accountability piece of the test. Any ways in which it's hindered?

DP Coordinator 2: I can talk in a very practical way. This may not be so useful for your research but in a very practical. An example, I have a little bit of a battle with my English department every year because they have a philosophical difference to me, in that, I brought in a program. I want things to run in the same way for all of the kids.

Based on that, if teacher X they want to teach these offers. Teacher Y wants into those offers and teachers Z wants to teach those offers. The students may not have the same teacher year one and year two of the program. We do what we can to a degree. We do but there's not a standard.

From my perspective, there seems to be an inconsistency. When it comes to the end of review and going back over preparing for the exams, it's difficult. You got students in the room. You might have students who come from three or four different teachers but in the room, you've got students who've looked at maybe 12 different texts, rather than three texts. If they'd had been with the same teacher, for example.

Now, in terms of freedom that could have given-- The teachers got some freedom to approach the course in whatever way they see fit. That's great. In terms of accountability, that makes it quite difficult because I've got lots of teachers doing this in very different ways. It's very difficult to actually distill out what's gone well, and what's gone badly.

In terms of text selection, or what works with students or which teachers have done a good job or a less good job or what that means because everything is then mixed together. I know that that's not really about student agency, but it says that within the program there's good flexibility on how you go about it but there's a negative to that as well, from my administrative place.

Why does everybody have to do with these different texts? There's a very good argument why they do. I'm sure if I was a member of the English department, I would also be like "Yes, but I want to teach these. I'm really into Japanese literature and the guy next door is into Irish literature, we should both be able to do both those things."

Not only that, what they would like is if students have the ability to choose which pathway they go down. Yes, I'll go down and do what with Mr Butcher because Mr Butcher does Irish literature and I really like that. I don't want to do Japanese literature. That's a whole different can of worms that opens up.

If we were truly offering student agency, we would allow that choosing of their own pathway way beyond the allowance that we have. Which is here we'll allow you to do English lit at a higher level, but I'm not going to allow you to choose which teacher you go to because that is opening a whole different can of worms I really don't want to open.

Interviewer: You spoke a little bit to it, I think in terms of what TOK does, what CAS does. One of the ideas you might-- Have you heard of Gert Biesta?

DP Coordinator 2: Gert Biesta?

Interviewer: Yes. Biesta ... he's Dutch ... B-I-E-S-T-A. He's alive. He's a contemporary educational philosopher. He speaks about some, a pedagogy of disruption. He says a fundamental defining criteria is that a good education is going to needle kids. It's going to poke them. It's going to get them uncomfortable. It's going to expose them to the limits of their thinking.

You spoke a little bit about that in terms of TOK. Can you think of other ways in which the IB Diploma disrupts kids' worlds purposefully?

DP Coordinator 2: I can, actually. I think in most of the social studies to succeed, you have to in some way critically engage. By critically engaging, you have to look at, deconstruct, challenge, what is being given to you.

Say for example, when you as an economics teacher, you're given scenarios in economics, which you are forced to evaluate in some way or other. Part of that evaluation means going beyond. I mean, you can survive and succeed to a point just by regurgitating stuff out of the textbook, about Keynesian or neoclassical models.

To really excel, you've got to go and really question those and say, "Actually, this doesn't work, or this is problematic," or "Even though we see this here, it causes these problems and these issues." I think in most of the social studies, certainly, if you were to look now at global politics, which we've now put in place, in global politics, there's no additional content at higher level.

What you do have to do is, find global issues and deconstruct them and think about them in a very deep, critical way, in order to come to a conclusion. Usually, students you'll find, they'll pick a topic they're interested in, but once they start to deconstruct it and dig deeply, they often end up in uncomfortable places and their own viewpoint, is forced to shift or they are forced to present viewpoints that they might find unpalatable in some way.

I think that notion of disruption, you can see it in a lot of the social studies, and you can certainly see it in students, I think at the upper end of maybe the intellectual spectrum or the school spectrum, possibly.

I think it's the same, film, art, in Visual Arts and theater, they are all in some way disruptive in their approach to education, because they're non-examed. They're completed with elements that force you to challenge the status quo. You look at a comparative study of film and you deconstruct it and think about that in a very quick manner and you're no longer a passive recipient of film.

Often, the common things that I get from film students is studying film in IB ruins their experience of film, they never enjoy another film in their lives. They can't look at a film without deconstructing it and looking at [unintelligible 00:32:02] or camera angles and edits. That, in itself is a disruptive influence, you're disrupting their experience of film in order to generate a better understanding of film. I think the same thing occurs in theater; the same thing happens in Visual Arts. There's always a constant tension in Visual Arts between the students wanting to just express themselves and do their art and make art, and then that realization that that is a very relatively minor part of the visual arts curriculum.

Most of it is thinking much more deeply about what art represents, who does what, why is it this way? What does that do in society in terms of genre over time, and the challenges that art has to us as a community.

I think it's very clear that in the IB, maybe it's not as disruptive as Biesta, is prodigy, he's provoking this idea that we should disrupt, and that's a good thing. I think the IB is disrupting within its relatively conservative framework and limits, as you say, countable to many, many other institutions.

For it to become too disruptive, to cross too many lines, that disruption then becomes damaging potentially to its political framework within which it exists, the social frameworks and the colleges. You've got to be realistic that disrupt [inaudible 00:33:31] is education, but

it has to happen with a context where it doesn't challenge or undermine the value of the ultimate outcome, I think. [unintelligible 00:33:44] I'm not sure if there was anything useful there.

Interviewer: Very much so. You should be an art teacher. Personally, I can't think of an example off the top of my head. Anything in terms of maths or science that could be? It's a harder one.

DP Coordinator 2: Much. Sciences, I think yes. I think in science, you probably could, but if I went to math first, fundamentally, math is-- I'm not a math teacher and if there was a math teacher in the room, though, I'm sure they would shoot me down. I think math of all the subject is the most formulaic.

In the way that math exists, it's very difficult to look at math in a particularly disruptive way, other than maybe the way you teach math. There are different ways of approaching it, but the math itself is an entity. You learn math, you apply math, you practice math, in different places, geometry, algebra, whatever, but in order to be disruptive, I don't think you get to be disruptive in math until you become a professor of math, probably.

Interviewer: Is that idea though, of applying math somewhat disruptive because I think in many settings like in the UK or the US in terms of the standardized tests that they go through, kids don't really apply math. I think kids do math. Is that too big of a leap, though? I'm not trying to fish for answers, but could the disruption be the fact that it's not just a test where they're regurgitating a formula? They're applying it in some new and novel ways?

DP Coordinator 2: Which is true. They do have to do that. I think you're absolutely right. The way the math curriculum is manifested in the IB, you do have to apply it. You can't just be purely passive. It's not a rote learning of math, as it is, I think, in many places.

With my slightly cynical head on, I still end up thinking that they just do math. It's a bit like what they try and fish around for is a place where math is obviously done and they then do their math in that place. I don't think the whole. I could be doing math [inaudible 00:36:14] I agree with you, people do math rather than explore math, challenge math.

Except I think at the very highest levels of math. Not anymore, it's now [unintelligible 00:36:32] to do further math. Often, they are at a place where they are challenging math, they're challenging existing proofs or challenging existing approaches to problems. For the 99% of students doing math, they're happy [unintelligible 00:36:46], happy to accept this is the way to go about solving these equations. In terms of disruption, not much scope for it, I would suggest.

I think in science is a lot more, I think in science there is definitely a lot more because you have that ability for it to exist in the real world. As soon as it exists in the real world, you can look at different contexts and different ways that people are using it.

It's got in every one of the sciences now, they've now raised questions of ethics, this idea that the implications of science and should we do, not just can we do things? Should we do things? If we do these things, what are the implications for humanity if we do these things?

I think as soon as you raise those questions, you open those doors, you've got far more scope for that kind of questioning, disruptive, critical approach to a subject. Don't get me wrong, I realized in most chemistry lessons, they're still doing chemistry. I think IB has made an effort to say, "You need to think about chemistry, not just do chemistry."

Interviewer: They haven't gotten that far in math yet?

DP Coordinator 2: No, I don't think they have. I don't think that. Even in the new curriculum in math, all they've done is carve that math into slightly different boxes, but I think you're just doing math.

Interviewer: Are there ways in which the diploma program educates formally kids to be critically aware of self and also of society?

DP Coordinator 2: Yes, I think so. It's easy to go back to get back to TOK for this because knowing that's their natural place, there you have this idea of no self is know, and how self is know fits into wider communities of knowledge. That's a very obvious one with this personal shared knowledge distinction, or no, we're at the center of it, [unintelligible 00:38:42] is now again.

I think, in all subjects, there is a concerted effort by the IB to bring that TOK approach into all the subject areas. You can't find a guide or a textbook now even in math that doesn't have something that provokes the teacher to engage with that notion of knowledge beyond just their subject, the idea that you learn this stuff.

There is a critical element to it that is important for students to engage with. I think that when I say engage, that's them on a personal level is relevant to them and individuals as well, not just this theoretical, global [inaudible 00:39:28].

Now, I think the IB work hard on that. I think it's always a place of tension because I think most of your teachers are happy going through the curriculum and delivering and going to the exam. Some, it's easy to fall into the trap of just TOKs and other checkbox I need to do. "I haven't mentioned TOK for the last month, maybe I should just mention TOK here," rather than thinking a bit more deeply about how this supports the learner, supports knowledge, and is [unintelligible 00:40:03] when going to this process.

Interviewer: Do you think it's a function of the time constraints that maybe leave some of us not able to do it so much? Or is there more to it than that, the limits are jumping in?

DP Coordinator 2: I think it's a bit of both. I think the time constraint is the most common, I would imagine defense mechanism that most teachers use. I think there's also an element of awareness. There's also an element of not knowing what TOK can bring to your subject, not knowing how it can help you and not just be a hoop to jump through, or a hurdle to get over, or a checkbox you need to put into your curriculum online and say, yes, I've addressed TOK here. I think there's a responsibility there for people like me in the school administration to sort of bring teachers onboard and try and get them to realize that they're not in a silo. They're not in their own little bunker of physics. That there is a whole host of wider knowledge implications that need to be considered and brought. TOK can do those things. Albeit some of those things, I say those things, some of those things.

Interviewer: I'm jumping out of it. Anyways in which the DP educates or formally allows students to challenge themselves, to challenge a school setting, to challenge communities as a result of the analysis, the reflection? Obviously, we were engaging kids to challenge, to be reflective, we want them to make change. Does it actually allow them the chance to do that?

DP Coordinator 2: I think the DP allows them a chance to do that. Whether school environments and the way they deliver the DP facilitate that is, I would imagine, immensely variable. It depends very much in your school setting. If you imagine, speaking from this context as an example, so we have 200 DP students a year, so we have 400 students in the diploma program at any given moment. The scope and freedom for the individualization of program and the ability of individual student choice agency engagement of whatever that might be in terms of challenging is diminished as just as a function of scale.

Whereas if we were a school of maybe, 50 or 60 students with much smaller groups and much more flexibility, we have relatively rigid systems given the [unintelligible 00:42:50] There is much more scope for those things. The idea of education, maybe for activism as an example and get [unintelligible 00:43:01] students become activists in terms of their learning and applying their learning for a better world, for one of the more, sort of a noble goal. Part of the IV's key goal is education for a better world, and we want students to do that.

For us, probably the only place where that naturally occurs is from CAS. In terms of building that into more regular curricula through those, it's difficult to imagine that happening in many

other places. Global politics, yes. [unintelligible 00:43:41] the curriculum to encourage that. The way the curriculum is designed is instead of us giving you some more content, we will allow you to choose content, get involved with and engage with on your own, and that then encourages student agents. In Biology, for example, you've got a teacher with a stack of content trying to get through that in 240 hours, or probably 230 hours because no one manages 240. To give students a place of freedom to explore, engage, act upon values-driven things, possibly is unlikely.

Even though there might be curriculum material in there about climate, or extinction, or environmental damage, which it exists, so these are very natural places for student engagement, and activity or activism, there's still no scope in terms of time pressure to do that, so that's tricky.

Interviewer: In terms of what you've seen, in terms of CAS and students engaging in CAS, obviously you've come up with a few examples, but maybe more broadly, has it been of significant success? Is it something that the IB allows for, and it's a good way for kids to become aware of this could become a thing. To what degree do you think CAS is- have you experienced, have you seen it is truly successful in kids actively challenging and making improvements, and obviously it's within that scope of it's limited in hours, it's limited in time, but would you mark it as a success for the average 17, 16-year-old kid going through?

DP Coordinator 2: I think the majority of kids find, again, you're very conscious. There is a very context-specific element to this. I think CAS, the way schools do CAS can vary the way we as a school have chosen to do CAS is that we have moved from a few years ago where students could go all over the world, and sign up and do CAS trips to Nepal or go and do rafting in Bali, and all these various things which are sold as CAS experiences and trips, and we moved away from that very consciously to say if our focus of CAS is to make things better in a community, we live in a community where many, many things could be made better, and the experience should be one of going out, experiencing the world beyond your current experience and ideally doing something to make that place better in some way. As a school, as an institution, we have been very conscious that every student, and we extended it from just the DP all the way across the nine through 12. We have a week where every student in the high school, all 800 of them, class is suspended for a week and they will do something in the Philippines that forces them. It's now a graduation requirement to do that. For us, one other Saturday service where they must be engaged in a service activity. That fulfills the requirement, kind of service requirement for IB that's great. They do a tick box.

What you do notice is an awful lot of students get involved in things, and that encourages a much more long-term [unintelligible 00:47:04] an emotional engagement because students will end up doing the same thing for a number of years, and then they're part of a group, and then they lead a group, then they make a change. All students, obviously not. There's a lot of kids who go through it and they're like, yes, I need to do CAS, what do I need to do? check it on. A significant number do make a difference. They do set up their own NGOs. They do set up organizations who make a difference. I think one of the big, maybe long-term, the underrepresented part of this study, we looked at IB to college, but maybe we should look at IB beyond college because the ultimate goal is you have that pay-it-forward or pay-it-back notion where you have students who go through this, they make a vocation, a social issue of their choice. They've worked in that, they go to college, they do some more work, possibly. Then the idea start and they come back and they set up and work in that organization. Or they're professionally working for a bank, that's fine, but they've now got a social conscience and an awareness of something that they can pay back into the community. They've just then moved into a wider community, and that sounds a bit idealistic, I realize that. You've seen it, I've seen it happen here in numerous ways, numerous ways.

Interviewer: Yes, and it's one thing that being in the school for a while, you get to see those kids come back once they've graduated from university and make those changes.

DP Coordinator 2: Yes, maybe that's the surcation of the Philippines. Maybe that's a Filipino thing rather than a global thing, and I'm conscious of its context. I do believe if schools are just doing that kind of off the shelf, buy a package, send kids away on a kind of glorified vacation, I don't think that's really fulfilling the philosophical requirement of CAS. That's just my take on it rather than an IB take on it.

Interviewer: Well, it seems at the heart of it, one of the driving objectives is that the CAS experiences are meant to change the kid rather than change others.

DP Coordinator 2: Yes.

Interviewer: And so, hopefully, we're serving that rather than the idea of just going out there and doing something for somebody else.

DP Coordinator 2: Yes. It is a win-win, isn't it? We're hoping that good is done and the student is developed at the same time. If it's only one or the other, then you know you need to think about it a bit more maybe.

Interviewer: Ways in which the DP is structurally allowing kids to engage in higher-order thinking skills, evaluation, analysis, synthesis. Is it something there that's in there in the program that demands it, ways in which you see that? I know that lots of the events have touched on that, but any other pieces to add there in terms of how higher-order thinking specifically comes across?

DP Coordinator 2: I think it's pretty clear when you look at any of the assessments for the diploma, you can't really succeed at a very high level. You can get through, but you can't succeed at a high level without some of those higher-order thinking skills. The reality is even more internal assessment, which involves you involved in something at a much deeper level for your exam, you look at any exam in the IB apart from the Paper 1 in sciences, which is still multiple choice, every other example you look at is always moving towards those higher-level thinking skills. It would be impossible to do well without some of that stuff.

I think teachers as well, we've gotten a lot of students. The way teachers are encouraged to drink the cool-aid of the IB if you want is very much to try and work towards those higher-order thinking skills. Everything about it is this idea of constructivism towards inquiry and agency and the idea of evaluation and analysis. So, it might be discussed, and I think it's very clear, it's not just a curriculum, it is a pedagogical methodology, it is an educational philosophy, and those two things are very clearly placed upon the teacher as an expectation beyond just the delivery of the Biology grading.

I think the IB work hard on that. Even the way that their workshops are structured, pure category workshop. A lot of that is about flippantly drinking the cool-aid of the IB, but is really getting them to buy into this philosophical and pedagogical approach, which is consistent across all the subjects. No matter what you do you still go through that CAT1 process that says, look, here is what the idea is about, here are the values here, the things that we expect in terms of approaching the subject, not the content itself, but how you go about this? What is [unintelligible 00:52:07]? What does that look like?

I think it's pretty clear from every level that the IB works towards that. Whether that manifests itself in every classroom? That's a different question, but I think certainly wherever possible the idea of moving in that direction.

Interviewer: At the heart of it is the design, obviously, how it's brought to life will vary. Then the last question, what about opportunities for kids, for students to create knowledge? Obviously, the higher order of thinking skills are there, we need analysis, we need application we need synthesis. What about any ways in which it's structurally asking kids to come up with-- even if they're not coming up with a new theory of relativity obviously, the

ways in which at least to the student and feels like they're creating and coming up with new knowledge.

DP Coordinator 2: Theory of knowledge I think encourages that. [unintelligible 00:53:10] the moment, our students have finished their TOK essays. You need them to think about knowledge from their own lens. They've got a look at that, find their own personal engagement with knowledge. Their own examples of knowledge, and put that together in what is effectively a novel way, they are going to be the only person who have written that essay in that way with that knowledge brought to there. Whether [unintelligible 00:53:40] it's interpreting knowledge in our own way.

Let's say they construct their own knowledge through whatever lens they've chosen to use. It's a difficult because it depends how you define the notion of constructing knowledge there. Often you go into a TOK class, it's very easy to fall into a trap. It annoys me when I read the examiner's report and they say, these examples are overused or cliché, and I'm thinking, they're cliché to me and they're cliché to you as an examiner, that doesn't mean they're cliché to the student, that might be the first time they've ever thought about this. This idea of new knowledge, to them they are constructing new knowledge. Just because they've made a connection with something that I think is obvious and I've seen around for 20 years, it still might be constructive because to them, it's new.

Sometimes we're a little quick to jump on that bandwagon of criticism a little bit. In terms of subjects, I think it's hard. I think it depends if you were looking at the arts, I think there's a very clear place where students can construct knowledge because there is-- like design, it's not an exam, there's not a fixed set of content that you need to regurgitate. It is very much open to you creating your own interpretation of art, whatever form that might be theater, music, dance. In other areas--

Interviewer: What about the IA like for example, in geography and economics, in even math, Group 4, the kids are, like you're saying they're setting up in a new way. It's not fixed, it's not pre-determined.

DP Coordinator 2: No, I agree, and I think that there's been a movement away as well, from bulk IA's. In the past where everyone would do the same thing, and do their own interpretation, now almost every subject, certainly in the sciences and the social sciences now, kids have to do their own investigation, is has to be far more personalized than it was. I think there's been a shift towards that individual investigation, and therefore we're investigating constructive knowledge on their terms. Certainly, many, many years ago, you would take the kids on a field trip, everyone studied a beach, everyone did the same measurement and wrote it up.

Yes, there's a little bit of scope for creation of knowledge, but it's very limited. Whereas now, no, you might go to the beach, but you have 20 kids and all of them are doing completely different investigations around that beach and constructing a whole different set of knowledge that's very personal to them. There might be overlap, but generally, they're doing very different things. I think the IB have moved in that direction. Yes, I think you're right. Is it truly constructive knowledge? Yes, it's not creating a new theory of relativity, but they are doing things that are independent and individual and taking them beyond the other class members or community members, so in that case, yes.

Interviewer: And you linking back to that idea of what's cliché to us, is a new novel the kids, and, so when they apply that to a new setting, we've done it because we're 50 years old, we've been teaching this forever. For them, allowing them just the opportunity to do that is something that the AP system doesn't do, or the British A-Levels don't do or other school systems, they didn't even have that in mind as a frame of reference. If you were to take your geography kids to the beach, you'd see 20 different labs. 18, you would have predicted what they would be, but the very fact that the kids have the opportunity to come up with what they

feel is new is-- I think it's a good stepping stone anyhow because it'll get them hopefully, by the time they're in grad school, they will come up with something truly new and truly novel that would be a surprise to you.

DP Coordinator 2: Yes. Even the process, one of the most difficult process is often, teachers complain about it, is the students deciding upon what they're going to investigate.

Interviewer: It's everything.

DP Coordinator 2: Yes, that's super difficult. I think if you do the extended essay, one of the most difficult things is setting out your research question at the start, and agonizing over what I look at? How am I going to do this? Is it in the scope of this, the scale of this? How am I going to get-- that process of thinking through, even before you've kicked off the process, you're constructing knowledge there. I think you're hinting at the idea of way in the future. That's an extremely valuable process to go through.

Interviewer: Because like you said, I would have given the same, i.e., in the same article, I probably did in terms of the first practice, anyhow, here's one article, you're all going to analyze it in the same way. Whereas asking kids to come up with that scope and scale, we used to agonize over just teachers. I think that's the demanding part is for us as teachers to ask kids to come up with their own scopes and scales, that demands a lot of us because we must be-- that's why the inquiry is so hard because unless we've truly mastered that, as a teacher, it's not just, "Hey, go do whatever you want." We need to have led them to where they need to go, so it feels like they're doing it on their own, but they're not quite.

DP Coordinator 2: That's it really high-risk place to be, the teachers it's difficult because you are-- we started out talking about accountability. In the back of the mind of a teacher is, I want you to do the best you could possibly do, and I know that what you're talking about is-- ill push you towards something that I think might be successful, but I'll still offer you the freedom to say, here's what I want to do and go away and do it and for teachers to let go of those reins is, I think very difficult for many of us, for most teachers I think it's probably a difficult balance to strike. I think that manifests itself often in problems between supervisors and extended essay students.

Interviewer: Yes, or I think maybe for us at our level, I think the real challenge is you've got somebody new who's coming in, they're with five years of decent experience. They're coming into the DP for the first time and they have no idea how to do that, so how do we let go of the reins to allow them to jump into this without going truly off the rails. At the end of the day, they still need to get the kids through a course, and we want them to do it in a certain way, but it's tricky. Obviously, you coming in you're going to do whether you could probably teach film, let alone geography let alone TOK, but how do you get somebody new to your school, fitting into that English department, who's got latitude of choice of this and that. How do you find ways to make sure that things come across well? The hunch-

DP Coordinator 2: You're absolutely right. You, yourself are accountable to a whole host of other things. When letting go of the reins is a high-risk strategy in some cases. When your teacher's been there for 10 years and you know they're a safe pair of hands, that's fine, the reins have let go, they're doing the right thing. You hope they continue to do the right thing. Your new staff member who's come teaching AP in South Dakota for the last few years, the contextual shift is so great. I hear like a-- That's a tricky balance.

Anonymized Interview Transcript – DP Coordinator 3 – February 24, 2020

Biographical Overview – DP Coordinator 3

Position: DP Coordinator

Years in Position: 10

Years Working with IBDP: 18

Number of Students in IBDP Program @ Current School: 140

Interviewer: In terms of an introduction, the dissertation investigates the impact of neoliberal educational reform on national school systems like in the UK or US and is looking into the implications the measures of accountability have on teaching and learning. The purpose is to ultimately test the degree to which the IBDP in international school schools is able to provide a similar level of accountability and then investigate the degree to which the IBDP provides a good education.

The first part of the interview is more focused and follows up on a few points raised from the questionnaire in terms of the accountability piece. Then the main part of the interview looks at the degree to which the IB Diploma Programme can bring to life or does bring to life in its design a good education. The questions get at elements of what a good education could be or could look like.

Anything I ask if you have any clarifying questions, ask away. I'm happy to obviously add detail or explain or expand anything you're needing explained or expanded. In total, it shouldn't take too long, around 45 minutes.

Please note that I am recording our conversation and will ultimately turn it into an anonymized transcript that will be submitted with the final dissertation. If there is anything you would not like recorded, please let me know.

Interviewer: The first question has to do with measures of accountability in the IB Diploma Programme. The framing question is, to what degree do you find that there is accountability in the IB Diploma Programme in providing true measures of assurance for the quality of teaching and learning? To what degree do you feel that as a parent who had a son go through or sons go through the program, did you feel like there were ways- or as a teacher teaching, were there ways to truly have some kind of check and balance for the overall quality?

DP Coordinator 3: I think my short answer is I think it provides broad accountability, but I think it fails at individual accountability sometimes with individual kids. I think the fact that it has had external exam that they work to standardize across all programs, definitely the intention behind there I think is good and allows for kids to be comparing themselves and universities as well to be able to take their kids as they are going through. I think the fact that there is so much human interpretation of all the individual pieces for that accountability is where it falls down. I think you and I have seen that when we work with kids and we see kids who are predicted at certain areas and suddenly fall short, whether that be the teacher's problem, whether it be the IB examiner's problems, whether it be a failings of how the questions were worded. I think anytime you have this mass bureaucracy and stuff there is going to be individual accountability problems.

Interviewer: In terms of the mass bureaucracy any ways or any thoughts in terms of how that comes to life?

DP Coordinator 3: Well, I think that the intention behind it is to be a university preparatory program, and I think it does well to set up things that are very mimicked by university studies. The kids actually have to do long-term assignments, breaking down big pieces of work, having high stakes examinations at the end of courses. All of those things I think are useful because kids gain familiarity as they go through it. I think that the interpretation of that, kids at the developmental age of grade 11 and 12 as well as the concurrency of learning and things that they're doing means that it doesn't always happen as well as it could. I think it's so much left to the interpretation and the support systems within schools with reducing fears and anxiety with setting up things like to help kids, like assessment calendars, all those kind of things. I think there could be a lot of interpretation, so the ideal doesn't always exactly play out.

Interviewer: Thank you. One of the areas of focus for the dissertation is looking at or comparing and contrasting what happens in the Diploma Program versus the US or the UK where it's a more limited model if you will. One of the things that IB Diploma Program has, it's trying to teach kids in more broader ways. It's trying to get them to engage in inquiry-based learning. It's meant to educate the whole child more and at the same time you have these measures of accountability that are still at the end of the day, high stakes exams. From your experience even not just now as an administrator but back even when you're teaching, to what degree did you feel that those measures of accountability, the exams in the Diploma Program particularly limited your ability to know your kids individually and then to differentiate at as much an individual basis as you could?

DP Coordinator 3: I think actually the exams at the end of it do provide accountability, but I think in some way it makes it-- the DP like other programs because in the end you are teaching towards the test that is a grade that universities are going to value or look at. I think it's interesting because I think some programs really value that grade and so there's a lot of pressure around the IB diploma grades. I think some don't like the US even what we are going through that with kids and a lot of our kids are going to US they don't need their IB grades necessarily and so they feel less pressure but just the fact that teachers are working with kids in a classroom they have to make sure kids meet all of those standards and that is a high-pressure situation. I think also the fact that schools have interpreted and used those grades to show the measure of success of the program. I think they use them for board reports. I think they used them for recruiting. I think these are for all sorts of reasons that it adds another element of stress and pressure.

Interviewer: In your experience did that get in the way of your ability to individualize your instruction to differentiate?

DP Coordinator 3: Yes absolutely. I think that you're teaching towards a range of kids and I think the kids, when their interest falls outside of that range or when their abilities falls outside that range you have to pull them back into it somehow because there's only so many things you can do with 150 hours or 240 hours' worth of material in that two-year program or 16-month program.

Interviewer: What about the same or a similar question. What about your ability as a DP teacher to innovate, to try new things, to be somewhat exploratory or innovative in terms of your teaching practices? Did you feel that you have that you had that ability that you would take some risks?

DP Coordinator 3: I think sadly more so at the beginning of my career than I did later on. I think when I was starting to teach, I saw more possibilities in the program. I think the more I got competent at teaching that particular syllabus, the less I saw that. It's funny because we

talk about this in our program now where we're dealing with-- we're doing facility innovation and we're trying to figure all these ways to do innovative space and teaching and stuff. We fly in teachers all over the world, different big programs to see what's being done and everyone's doing some amazing stuff in grade six, seven, eight or grade nine, 10. Literally in grade 11, and 12, their [unintelligible 00:10:42] themselves is why don't really need to do that because that's clearly just the DP is the standard that we're working towards. I don't believe not because you can't do it, I do believe that there is a new trade-off something for it. I'm not so sure that teachers individually have the ability to make that trade-off. I think that the school sets up a lot of the culture of achievement and importance around the scores and kids and families and stuff too. It's not just teachers wanting the kids do well. I think it's too hard for teachers sometimes to risk that.

Interviewer: The trade-off there is overt success in terms of scores?

DP Coordinator 3: Yes.

Interviewer: Necessarily or perceived and therefore not tried?

DP Coordinator 3: I think it's a high-pressure situation to proceed to try to lose it. I think there's ways around it. Like I said, I think I would have been more open to it when I was first starting my career because I cared less of the weight, I don't worry of that and more opportunities and possibilities, I guess. Once I started to do it for a while, the reality of how unachievable was just to do that program within that amount of time and to get kids to a place where I can feel they're really well prepared for what they're doing. I don't know. I think maybe that's part of my limitation as a teacher as opposed to necessarily just the programs.

Interviewer: Then when you look at yourself now from DP coordinator to now administration full time, do you feel more of that pressure in terms of results and board reports and making sure that this--

DP Coordinator 3: Way less, way less.

Interviewer: You do feel it less?

DP Coordinator 3: I feel it's so much less and I feel so much more the push of the importance of what the program stands for and what it can do. It's because I'm not mired in the bureaucracy and all the little details and things that are needed for teachers in terms of documentation, in terms of exposing kids to things. DP courses have gotten in their efforts to try to connect in their efforts to try to make things more holistic for kids. They provided more information, but more information isn't always good. More information also means I have more things to check off as I go through.

Interviewer: Just checking in one more time just to make sure. Is there anything necessarily inherent in the Diploma Program that puts the pressure there or is it more contextual schools wanting to do well and prove themselves and justify it?

DP Coordinator 3: No, I think there is something inherent in the program. I think all the things that I was saying in terms of having the high degree of--
[sound cut]

Interviewer: Hello, I think I got you back now.

DP Coordinator 3: Yes. Sorry, I'm going to plug you in. I think that it's both. I think that definitely, the DP makes it [unintelligible 00:13:52] there's lots of things that the teachers have to do so there's definitely some pressure involved in that. I think it's the school too and as an administrator, I can tell teachers what I want their focus to be and what I think is important through the program.

However, when I'm publishing their scores to the board, when the board is having comments or reports or teacher, parents are talking about the success of a teacher or the success of kids, when we're publishing what universities they get into, I think there's a lot of things inherent in the way we talk about our results. That makes it hard to get around.

Interviewer: Then last question for this first part, in terms of preparing students well for university, how well does the IBDP do in terms of preparing kids academically?

DP Coordinator 3: Really, really well.

Interviewer: Then what about socially and emotionally?

DP Coordinator 3: Socially, emotionally when dealing with balancing difficult academic programs and academic work, great. I think the stress that kids feel of having to deal with high stakes things really helps them. I think in terms of their ability to relate to each other, I think the fact that inherently there is a cohort support mentality that goes through as kids go through together. I think they know how to band together. I think they know how to work together.

I think it gives them a lot of those important social-emotional skills. I think they'd have to end up working with their counselors and they have to know how to access the help to be as successful as possible.

Interviewer: Anything in the curriculum that helps develop certain skills anyways in which certain dispositions are brought to life? Or is it more just by virtue of going through it, they learn to balance what is a demanding life they deal with pressure, they come together? Is that a function or just the demands or is there something in the program itself that actually helps educate kids in terms of becoming more, I don't know, open-minded, caring, reflective people?

DP Coordinator 3: If I was working for the IB, I might say something about the learner profile at this point. [unintelligible 00:16:02] the fact that it's this thing that we have to do to build into programs. To be honest, a lot of teachers I've worked with, I haven't seen them-- It has been more to the side based on through their course to be able to talk about those principles and those attributes that has been driving forces behind lessons.

Interviewer: Have you experienced the school setting in which the learner profile has been meaningfully brought to life in the Diploma Program?

DP Coordinator 3: No, in the middle years, yes but really, I haven't seen it in any meaningful way in the Diploma Program. It almost feels like there's this mentality that the elementary and PYP and the NYP are really about processing, growing, building skills. The DP, by the time the kids get there, it's kind of the show and so that's where they're kind of putting stuff together and showing what they're capable of doing as shown through them doing their task work, as shown through them putting together the extended essay or the conversations and work they're doing in TOK. I think all of that stuff shows the putting together nature.

Interviewer: All right. Shifting gears a little bit. This is the second part. There are six different questions looking at what constitutes a good education from a few different points. Then the first question, it looks to the IBDP program, are there any ways in which the internet's design helps educate students or purposefully educate students to be truly independent learners who are not only well involved in the process but who actually have agency over their learning? To what degree are they actually subjects of that learning process or is it something that's imposed upon them as objects that gain knowledge and content?

DP Coordinator 3: I think it's definitely up to the kids to take control of parts of their learning. I think there's not enough and I think sometimes it's a bit tokenistic. I think the biggest areas that kids have control over are the choices of courses that they take. I think once they take certain courses, it's very much acted upon them. There isn't an area that I can think of where they can take their own interest and replace it within the curriculum to study as a free area of study or anything like that. I think where kids get a lot of choice and [unintelligible 00:18:29] through things like TOK and EE but even that has a prescribed format as to how they work.

Interviewer: Any other examples in terms of ways in which the Diploma Program is asking or is designed to get students to be independent, to be the drivers of the learning, not necessarily agency in terms of what they learn but the how of teaching of learning? To what degree is it student-centric or is it some-- I don't know.

DP Coordinator 3: Inherently and based in the program's how they're built, it creates more and more self-sufficiency in learning going through from elementary to middle school to high school. I think the way they're graded, I think the way they're assessed. The fact that grade 11 and 12, they don't do much process work. That's depending on the teacher, the way you do drafts, things like that, the way things are counted that way. It's all very much about end product so the ways in which kids can demonstrate their process or the ways in which kids choose to put together work it's very much in their choice.

Interviewer: Anything in terms of the measures of accountability in the IB Diploma program that either help or get in the way or hinder students having agency in their learning?

DP Coordinator 3: I'm sorry, ask it again.

Interviewer: Is there anything in terms of the measures of accountability, things like the final exams that limit students' ability to have a choice?

DP Coordinator 3: Yes. I think even the perception sometimes. When kids will come in and do things like for their math where they have an open option as to how they want to tackle it, they will ask their teachers things like, "What will get me a better mark?" or "Is this to be too simplistic?" I'm interested in enzymes let's say, but is that something that can be overdone, is that going to change how the examiner is looking at me? I think there's-- I don't know. I don't even know that you can blame kids. They're working for themselves, and I think it's not fair to say that their grades shouldn't matter to them. Of course, it should.

Interviewer: How come?

DP Coordinator 3: We've set up the game for them. We told them that, "You need to have certain grades to go to a good university, and the universities are following that from the way they're entering kids." I think later on to say, "Well, we care more about the learning than we do about the grade," is, all disingenuous and not fair.

Interviewer: Is that on the Diploma Program or is that on us as schools and parents and administrators?

DP Coordinator 3: Completely is schools not blaming the Diploma Program at all. The Diploma Program, like I said, is a great program to prepare kids for universities. I think it really does prepare them and have them ready to face it, and I think kids do well as a result of going through it.

Interviewer: One of Gert Biesta's ideas is that a curriculum successful education is one of-- He says a pedagogy of disruption is meant to challenge directly where kids are and is to get to shake them out of regular ways of doing, seeing, being understanding. It's not meant to be too much because you can't just leave kids questioning everything, but to what degree is the Diploma Program designed as a pedagogy of disruption to jolt kids to see themselves and also to see the world in a very different way, or to get them to question how they've been seeing the world?

DP Coordinator 3: How excited were you when you discovered this researcher and his work? It sounds like right up your alley by the way. How much does the DP do that? I think it very much depends on the teacher. I think there are opportunities to do that, but I don't know necessarily that the-- the DP looks at more opportunities for kids to make connections, I think, than they do necessarily to disrupt kids learning. I think TOK specifically have asked kids to think about the way they're thinking about things, and obviously perspective and all of that comes into it as well and disruption.

Interviewer: Getting them to take a look at maybe the limits in terms of how they see themselves or see the world, even something simple as questioning themselves, getting them

just out of the regular habits of mind. One example, for example, within the arts typically kids are asked to look at new ways of seeing and understanding and interpreting. It's getting them to just step outside of what had been kind of contemporary arts and look towards what could be. There could be something there for example in the arts as [unintelligible 00:23:30].

DP Coordinator 3: Sure. I didn't see this as disruption by yes. In terms of expanding the ways in which they look at things, absolutely I think it definitely does that. I think that just simply through the intention of the curriculum being an internationally exposed thing from using whether it be scientists that are coming from all over the world, whether they're trying to draw in things for kids to provide them that global contact, that global perspective. Didn't quite think of it as disrupting.

Interviewer: Yes, and definitely don't want to stretch here and you shouldn't be stretching. If you haven't or you don't see TOK you spoke to in terms of CAS, in terms of getting kids out of their comfort zone or getting to see worlds in different ways--

DP Coordinator 3: I think so, but I think that CAS used to do it more. I think that they have made their requirements. They've flipped towards the middle a little bit more and made more things fit within it and allowed the interpretation of schools such that kids aren't being expected to do things at the same level or push themselves in the same way necessarily. I think that what you might give up in a program when you are trying to meet the needs of so many kids and trying to allow kids to have choice, I think then you do give up a little bit of the control of, "We're going to qualify this as being one thing and this as being the other." I think you start to see it a bit blended.

Interviewer: With the measures of accountability and primarily the exams there, is it realistic for something like the IB Diploma program like you're mentioning earlier trying to meet the needs of many kids, is it realistic that it could even become or that it could even aim to disrupt kids and get them to challenge and see things in new and different ways?

DP Coordinator 3: Yes, I'm open to the idea that it's possible but I think the exam is a big stumbling block for a lot of this. It's not a matter of just losing the exam, but if the exams were done differently, it's possible. If the intention wasn't the recall of facts or the application of certain facts, I think that you could do it differently. [unintelligible 00:25:46] the putting together of skills and the holistic knowledge that kids get from going through these courses, and that kids would come into these courses with more open-ended wide questions that allowed them to show their knowledge and bring in all the different things that they had learned and talked about and had been disrupted to come to those new understandings. I think that it's a different thing. I think it'd be really hard to standardize, I think it'd be very hard to train examiners to mark them and to compare them, but I think it would be really useful.

Interviewer: One of the things that seems to be important for a good education according to some anyhow it's the idea of kids becoming reflective of self, reflective of the communities, and becoming critical. Critically aware of self, critically aware of communities. To what degree does the-- are there structures in place, are there ways in which the Diploma Program purposefully brings that to life so that kids become questioning but also critical of self and community?

DP Coordinator 3: Yes, I think that's something they do really well through curriculum actually. I think that they have lots of opportunities where kids are expected to look at different populations or look at different contexts and be able to evaluate and say what's effective and what isn't and then to transfer that knowledge to other areas. I think actually that's a real strength of the program.

Interviewer: Any concrete examples?

DP Coordinator 3: I guess I'm thinking about economics in the way you would know in terms of economics program, the way that kids have to take their theoretical learning and

then apply it in a specific way to be able to say how it works or how it doesn't. I think in the way the kids do their IEs and history when they're talking about, they're never just recalling facts, they're bringing an evaluation to it and being able to say that. It's never just a "This person was wrong in history because of these things, but because of the way we talk about history because of how it's changed over time, because of the people that wrote it. Like they have all these other parts to it that they're able to analysis.

I think it's something that's done well. I think even the kids their own work every time they're asked to supply things with like an evaluation part to their work as to why it maybe isn't complete or why it's not, why there are other things that might affect how their conclusions that they're drawing. The world study I think is a good example of it. It's something Dave has done in the past eight years or so and I think it's something that's brought on a lot because of student interest, and because of their intention to blend things. I think the evaluation part of that is key.

Interviewer: As a result of kids being critical of self or critical of society or the communities, the ideal is then they hopefully do something with it rather than just criticize. Are there ways in which the IBDP expects to design kids to engage in and actively change self, actively change communities?

DP Coordinator 3: Other ways in which kids are expected to actively change their communities?

Interviewer: As a result of them becoming-- The hope is that if you're critically aware, you're aware of the need for change but then does the Diploma Program, does it actually allow and not just allow but expect kids to act upon that and do something positive, proactive?

DP Coordinator 3: I think the ideal is yes they expect. I think the gap is getting the skills for kids so that they can do it. The difference between coming up with an understanding of what a solution is and putting it into action, I think there's a gap there. I think that's an area that the DP doesn't have yet. I think schools fill that gap, and I think there is all sorts of leadership program training, I think there are CAS coordinators who are doing this mentorship. I think the individual teacher sponsors do a lot of that work necessarily, but I think it's something that the DP expects and sets out as an ideal and encourages, but I don't think that they necessarily fill the gap that the skills needed. Maybe it's enough that they just simply have that expectation, maybe don't need to subscribe actually or prescribe everything.

Interviewer: One thing you're mentioning I think is the idea that through the CAS Program kids can act. Any other examples in terms of how they might act as a result of the Diploma Program itself?

DP Coordinator 3: Well, I think that there's lots of kids that I've worked with that have either been sparked by their IEAs or even their extended essays. Things like that where they have been sparked with an interest and an understanding of something and wanted to move forward, whether it's worked out into a volunteer experience, whether it's been directing their course of study at university which has then led to them contributing to it in the field. There's all sorts of different ways that that can impact how it changes communities.

Interviewer: Then the second last question. One of the defining features of a good education is that it engages kids and asks and expects them to engage in higher-order thinking. They're needing to evaluate, to analyze, to synthesize, move beyond just applying knowledge but do something more with it. To what degrees have your experiences shown the Diploma Program to be effective in this regard?

DP Coordinator 3: I think it's been really effective in terms of the work kids do in their classes. I'm skeptical at the way it is tested though. I think that the individual, the assessments and stuff kids do, I think there's a high level of higher thinking cognitive skills that happen in their courses. You think about English and the IOCs, you think about-- I don't care, any of

the math stuff that kids, but the IEA I think is an incredibly difficult higher-order thinking thing. It takes months for the kids to come around to. It's not something that you can just simply give them a topic and have them run and go through it. It takes time and the acquiring of specific skills that they have to direct. I think when it comes to actually the exams, I think the higher-order skills are really limited. I think there's maybe a few tested within there. I know there's a lot of the command terms they use. We analyze and all of that part, but I think because it is a time test on 16 months' worth of material, there's only so much that can be shown in that context. So, DP program, yes. I think accountability part through the exam, not so much.

Interviewer: Any examples in the exam setting that it could be brought to life or the ways that which it's not?

DP Coordinator 3: Well, I think the fact that they feel the need to-- There's a whole bunch of requirements being met. The thing has to be an hour and a half. It has to be an hour and 20 minutes. It has to be able to be graded within this amount of time for examiners to get it back. It has to have all these different component parts. It's got to hit the syllabus from all these areas. I think they box themselves in a little bit in terms of what can be done. I also think that the more higher-order thinking skills you do, sometimes the harder it is to examine and standardize. I'm not saying none are being done and that's not fair. I think that there are some things that are able to be done well, but then there's more ambiguity in the marking. Things like, I keep thinking of the history papers. The kids write three essays for two and a half hours in that HL course. It is a lot of the applications but even that isn't super higher level. It's a lot of them recalling individual facts to be able to apply it to that specific scenario.

Interviewer: Not so much in terms of evaluation or truly synthesizing information?

DP Coordinator 3: I don't know, I think not a ton. I think there is some to it, but I don't think it's as much as they do through their classwork.

Interviewer: Then the last question, it's moving past the higher-order thinking skills. The idea is that a good education is one that engages kids in evaluation, analysis, synthesis, and then ultimately has them create knowledge of their own. Are there ways in the Diploma Program that are explicit in terms of its design to get kids engaged in the creation of knowledge? Not with the bar of coming from the new paradigm of physics, for example, but it could just be new and novel to them, but the fact that it is asking kids to come up with something that's new and novel to them.

DP Coordinator 3: I think the whole setup of the DP actually is meant to be personalized learning for kids. I think the fact that they are driven to learn across a number of different areas that helps them build that new understanding for themselves, not just about the stuff they're studying about who they are, about what they can do. I think the fact that they are learning all of this stuff at the same time allows for that transfer of learning skills. Especially those study skills, those hard learning skills, how to prioritize, how to break down assignments, all of those things I think happen as a result. That is a very personal learning that happens through the program for kids.

Interviewer: Any examples in which kids are asked to come up with new knowledge if you will, that's grounded in the subject they're studying or other areas of teaching and learning?

DP Coordinator 3: I think that's the intention for most of the culminating work that kids have to do for their IEAs. A lot of the classwork is that about acquiring knowledge across a broad range and then about synthesizing it and then applying it in a specific area. I think the work that kids are producing for their final IEAs, a lot of that has that ability to create that new knowledge for themselves. I think kids feel a drive to do that as well and feel like that is possible because of the open-ended nature of some of the IEAs. [unintelligible 00:36:15] kids, you think about the work that they do and the things that they get to compose and put together, it is not being done by anyone else, and it is highly personal. It is the creation of

something that could not have been done if they didn't have their own personal learning journey.

Interviewer: Is there anything in terms of the accountability measures, anything in terms of the assessment criteria, for example, that ask for or allow for lead to or expect knowledge creation? In any ways do the measures of accountability demand it or are designed to produce it?

DP Coordinator 3: I'd never thought about it before, but it must, because it does happen across I'd say all areas. It must, yes, I never thought of it in that way. Oh, you want a specific example?

Interviewer: No, not at all. Any questions that you have? That gets us through all the questions. Any questions or any thoughts that you want me to elaborate upon? Anything you'd like to elaborate upon or any questions that popped up as a result of going through the survey or the interview that you'd like to ask?

DP Coordinator 3: No, I don't think so. I'm pretty clear at this stage about what it is that I think is important through the IB Diploma Program. I think it is a really powerful program for kids to go through. I honestly, I do believe that it is the best program out there to prepare kids for university because I've looked at the A levels and taught it, and I've looked at the lead up through IGCSE. I've worked in the Canadian system and seeing what kids are doing there. I don't think that the DP goes as far as it could in terms of what they say they want and what they value. I'm still harboring a grudge about the fact that they don't mandate that people do a group six, that they make that optional. I'm still thinking that's a **[unintelligible 00:38:23]** they should make that a requirement, but I understand why they have to make it palatable for all kids in programs and opportunities after that.

Interviewer: Two quick things that I forgot. I don't know exactly how many I can guess, but I'm not sure how many years you've taught in the Diploma Program or worked in a DP school? 14ish?

DP Coordinator 3: Yes, 14, 15.

Interviewer: Where you are now, in year one and year two together, how many kids are in the Diploma Program roughly?

DP Coordinator 3: About 150.

Interviewer: About 75 kids per grade?

DP Coordinator 3: Yes, sounds about right.

Interviewer: Any other questions for me about the interview?

DP Coordinator 3: Are you still really interested in what you're studying?

Interviewer: Yes, actually I think more so. It's weird. Initially I think the interest was just learning and reading and investigating. I really liked that phase. Then I think I was happy to take notes and summarize lots of it. Then the next step was to squish that all together to make it fit the first three chapters basically of the dissertation. That wasn't so fun because the open-ended learning part is enjoyable, I think, probably for most, but then needing to squish it into something was a little bit hard because it had to fit something, I didn't like that, or I resented that part of it. But then once it's done, then I got onto this part here where I'm collecting data and then not become personal, I guess. I think there's less pressure of having it to fit in and less pressure to make sure that it's all researched, and this is justified. I can just make wild statements about anything. [laughs] There's freedom which I appreciate. I think this part now, I'm back in and interested. Because the questionnaire is done and the interviews are wrapping up, then I can begin to see how conclusions will wrap up.

It's fun to see it coming to an end. I think the last a little bit of actually truly typing it all up will be less enjoyable, but the very first part and this part here are the main parts to enjoy, I'm guessing. It's nice to have gotten through-- I don't know. Much of last year just felt a little more mechanical.

DP Coordinator 3: I'd like you to send me the research on that disrupting education and instructing kids.

Interviewer: Yes, yes, I'll send it to you. He's got a handful of books and lots of articles you can just easily find online. I think he's a really good person to read. There's nothing radical. He draws a lot upon John Dewey. I think he's just have taken what John Dewey said and taken it further maybe in some ways. There's lots of it is coming from there. His other big question is, it's kind of a harsh criticism of the US and UK public school systems, and it's not like they failed he says because they never were. You can't be a failing school system when you never have things right. The premises- [crosstalk]

DP Coordinator 3: [unintelligible 00:41:39] that harsh.

Interviewer: Yes. I don't know, but it's the ideas that neoliberalism and the businessification of schooling just took over. Nobody ever asked what should it produce. Everybody is upset because markets have ruined school. The market produces whatever you tell it to do. His big line is, we don't ask the questions, "Why? Why are we doing this? What's the purpose of education?" because if you assign the purpose to a market, it will produce it, but what we haven't done as educators is say, "This is what a good education is." The IB in general does. It is grounded in philosophy. It's grounded in best practice but not really.

Then the question is, if you give that to a market to spit out, it seems like it spits it out pretty well. The fault isn't the market. The fault is the DP is limited. Like you're saying, "We shouldn't be having kids to do group six. We should be a little more open-ended. We should, we should, we should." If we gave that to an international school on a private setting, it would spit it out if we told them what to do. The idea that maybe markets aren't the problem, it's the fact that in the US when you just told people to spit out standardized test results, that's what it did. The market was successful in achieving the goal, you just set the wrong goal.

DP Coordinator 3: I used to really believe that it was the fault of universities because universities have a certain kid that they are looking to accept, and that our kids really want to get to some those universities to learn with those professors and be in those programs, even though I think it's all the same in the end when you look at undergraduate. That being said, if that's what kids really want, then we fail them if we don't prepare them. Now I'm like universities really are quite wide in terms of what they're accepting, and the IB is just one thing that they have now have a better understanding of and they're taking kids. They like them because they are well-prepared to be the students that go through it.

Interviewer: Pay the bills for four years because they're not going to fail out.

DP Coordinator 3: Yes.

Interviewer: Cynically.

DP Coordinator 3: As opposed to saying that the kids are going to be the best contributors or going to be the best people to change their systems or push their thinking. If we brought a kid there with absolutely no report card, with no standardized tests, or maybe just an SAT, or maybe just whatever it is for-- If we did that, it's quite possible that the kids would be fine actually. You just have to have the parents understand it and take a risk, I guess, until you start to show that it can work.

Interviewer: The tough thing about our schools and our settings, if you're this crazy international school in Dakar, and people don't even know where Dakar is, they're not going to take our word for it that our kids are going to be well-prepared.

DP Coordinator 3: The other thing, too, I guess is that it's really hard to shift people's beliefs. We had a lot of teachers that have come from all over the world, and they've taught in successful DP programs. Having them come in, and then telling them things don't matter to us, that they have such an ingrained experience that do matter, is really hard to shift them. Even if your philosophy and application of the DP is more true and less results driven, I think that they find it hard to believe that because their experience is always been, "The end of this

year, you're going to graph my results and sit in a board meeting, and because we show that at the first meeting of every year, or because we put up the university acceptances. The DP coordinator's going to speak to me if I predict a five," on and on. I think the changing teachers is hard in a system that's already developed, and they have experience in. Even when they came in fresh to us actually, "You haven't done the DP?"

Anonymized Interview Transcript – Administrator 1 – February 14, 2020

Biographical Overview – Administrator 1

Position: Director of School

Years in Position: 18

Years Working with IBDP: 26

Number of Students in IBDP Program @ Current School: 140

Interviewer: In terms of an introduction, the dissertation investigates the impact of neoliberal educational reform on national school systems like in the UK or US and is looking into the implications the measures of accountability have on teaching and learning. The purpose is to ultimately test the degree to which the IBDP in international school schools is able to provide a similar level of accountability and then investigate the degree to which the IBDP provides a good education.

The first part of the interview is more focused and follows up on a few points raised from the questionnaire in terms of the accountability piece. Then the main part of the interview looks at the degree to which the IB Diploma Programme can bring to life or does bring to life in its design a good education. The questions get at elements of what a good education could be or could look like.

Anything I ask if you have any clarifying questions, ask away. I'm happy to obviously add detail or explain or expand anything you're needing explained or expanded. In total, it shouldn't take too long, around 45 minutes.

Please note that I am recording our conversation and will ultimately turn it into an anonymized transcript that will be submitted with the final dissertation. If there is anything you would not like recorded, please let me know.

Administrator 1: Okay.

Interviewer: The first question has to do with measures of accountability in the IB Diploma Programme. The framing question is, to what degree do you find that there is accountability in the IB Diploma Programme in providing true measures of assurance for the quality of teaching and learning? To what degree do you feel that as a parent who had a son go through or sons go through the program, did you feel like there were ways- or as a teacher teaching, were there ways to truly have some kind of check and balance for the overall quality?

Administrator 1: Within the limitations of the program and, if there's a limited way of teaching for kids to learn?

Interviewer: Yes.

Administrator 1: Within that limited scope, there are definitely checks and balances. There's a system and a structure and it's organized in a way that allows us to look at the learning outcomes and objectives of the program. In that sense, whether it's the steps along the way over the two-year period or the external exams at the end, there is data and ways of looking at learning that are beneficial and create some accountability, yes.

Interviewer: The exams, I understand, or I can obviously elaborate on that. You mentioned steps along the way that provides some data for accountability. Any examples there to flesh out?

Administrator 1: Well, obviously you have the IAs within the different curriculum for the different subjects, there are internal requirements that students have to accomplish and that teachers have to provide along the way. The internal assessments would be one example of that. Basically, the kinds of things that teachers are required to do within the two-year curriculum by the IB leading up to the external exam, knowing that the external exam is not the only aspect of assessment, that's what I meant by that.

Interviewer: I guess the bigger picture in terms of the dissertation is looking like recent movements-not recent, it's been 30 years-in terms of the US then UK, there's a heavy reliance on standardized testing to provide accountability and there are ways in which those measures limit teacher's ability to know kids, to differentiate, to be innovative in the classroom, to try inquiry-based teaching and learning, in what you've seen either as director or a teacher back when you're teaching in the diploma program, to what degree have you seen or have you felt directly teachers being able to truly know their students and actually change in their instructional strategies to meet their students' needs or to try innovative strategies? To what degree did it truly hem you in?

Administrator 1: Is this, remind me, dissertation focused on the diploma program?

Interviewer: Yes. The fundamental question is the degree to which it's a good education, and then the bulk of the dissertation is looking in defining what a good education is, and one of the big pushes, one of the big successes of the US or UK is they have accountability. The way they've brought it to life is horrific, but people want accountability. I guess the thrust of the dissertation is, does it provide accountability and at the same time allow for somewhat decent teaching and learning a better educational experience than what's in the US or UK?

Administrator 1: You may know the quote from Grant Wiggins, which goes something like, "Standardized tests are no excuse for bad teaching." It's a good quote to pull if you haven't already. I'm not sure I agree with that bulk of it but it's pretty much what it comes down to it. That means that every system, every UK national curriculum or the French baccalaureate or whatever the program is, has its requirements and its external exams. Within those limitations, every teacher can be innovative. If the question is, "Do I think it promotes innovation or limits innovation?"

I would say that it limits innovation because there is a pressure around IB scores and grades, and jumping through certain hoops in order to provide the curriculum on mass to groups of students. It's difficult to customize or personalize the learning if everyone has to jump through the same hoops and takes the same exam at the end. Within that, the IB has created some of that flexibility. It attempts to look at learning beyond simply filling in boxes and answering short questions.

In that sense, it's looking for more critical thinking, but it's still within the box and the box is limiting in and of itself. The pressures of university acceptance just on IB scores and following the parameters of every subject, is limiting and stifles innovation. You'll tell me if I'm not answering the question well enough, clearly for your purposes.

Interviewer: Yes, thank you. There's a third introductory question, at some truly macro level, to what degree do you feel the IB diploma program prepares students for success in university at an academic level? Then the second part is at a social-emotional level.

Administrator 1: I think in that regard, given the way universities admissions work and the way most first-year programs and university work, I think it does an excellent job because you hear anecdotally almost to our students, when they come back or report back, or my own kids for that matter, the first-year requirements of university was agreed maybe you had to do more rigorous things during the diploma program than they had to do writing an essay or research or all those kinds of things. It's a no brainer.

They're well skilled in all of those things. Given that's often what universities are looking for, especially in the first year, it does an excellent job of preparing them for those requirements. As far as stress or social-emotional health, I don't think the IB addresses that at all. I don't see a direct correlation between the IB. I see a lot of stress from kids having to do the IB. In that sense, maybe you could say it prepares the kids for stress in university because they'd been in a stressful situation in high school, but I don't think there's anything in inbuilt or cut within the program that attempts to address that, that I'm aware of.

Interviewer: I'm not trying to poke you too much. Anything in terms of the learner profile? Is that something that prepares students of a social-emotional level?

Administrator 1: I think that the IB is very contradictory in that it often doesn't walk the talk of its own learner profile or its own mission. The profile in many ways or the mission of the IB is laudable, but the actual, it's not walking that talk. There's a learner profile, so what? In terms of how it's inbuilt, for example, risk-taking is not built into the curriculum. Even if the profile talks about risk-taking, it doesn't mean that it's actualized within the learning, that I'm aware of or that I see.

Interviewer: I'm trying to phrase the question well, are there ways in which the limits of the accountability measures allow schools to effectively not engage well in something like the learner profile? Is it a function of the accountability or is it a function of the way in which they brought forth the learner profile, or is it a reverse functionality of everything's on the exam, so that's what we focus on?

Administrator 1: It's all of that. It's what you just said about the exam. It's also that the structure of the IB, some of it connects to learner profile, some of it doesn't. I think most people will view the learner profile as an add on. There's the IB and the IB requirements and the IB curriculum. There's different facets of the IB, and "Here's a learner profile. Oh yes, make sure that that's somehow part of what you're doing, pay attention to that," but it's not really embedded in the way learning works. The IB, it's probably in many ways the best kind of end of high school curriculum but it's still pretty inflexible. There's flexibility within each category so you can do Psych or Econ or History but then you're doing Psych and then within Psych, you got whatever the requirement of Psych are.

Interviewer: Yes. Thank you.

Administrator 1: You're welcome.

Interviewer: The next questions look at, I guess, what I'm trying to bring to life in terms of defining or distinguishing features of a good education. The questions are geared around getting your feedback, your understanding at a school-wide level, but also your experience of having taught it as well. In terms of ways and which some of the key elements of a good education, our experience story are possible within the Diploma Program as grounded in the program itself.

Obviously, you as the DP music teacher would have done things that are best practiced regardless of the Diploma Program, so ways in which more purposely the Diploma Program brings that to life. I guess it's a yes or no initially are their ways, but then in what ways have you noticed the Diploma Program to truly purposely promote kids to become independent active learners who really have agency over their learning?

Administrator 1: Most of the curricula provide for some level of choice. You got some ability to move in one direction or another, but the choice is generally pretty limited. I'm trying to be fair, [laughs]

Interviewer: You have years of excellent experience. The goal is to be you and not the others.

Administrator 1: I am being me, but I'm not trying to be me, being fair.

[laughter]

I think the IB provides for some level of choice within each subject area, most subjects are sideload. One of the ways the IB doesn't walk the talk is that it's not interdisciplinary any significant extent, maybe some courses that are, but essentially the curriculum is not interdisciplinary particularly. In fact, each course has different requirements that provide more or less choice and have different philosophies that are underpinning. For example, if you look at the sciences, such as Biology or Chemistry, there's a huge amount of memorization which goes against the philosophy of the IB, and which therefore creates limited amounts of choice.

If you look at other subject areas, you have greater choice. For example, the arts tend to have somewhat more choice than some of the other areas. Even within math, depending on which math you're doing, you have more choice of doing math studies. There's probably a lot more choice and flexibility than other areas of math. On the other hand, kids can do different kinds of projects where there is some level of choice within. It's limited, but within those limitations, there's some choice.

There's a nod to agency and independence within a pretty tight limitation.

Interviewer: I'm not sure, have you heard of Gert Biesta?

Administrator 1: No.

Interviewer: He's a contemporary educational philosopher. He coined the phrase, or one of his phrases is the idea of a pedagogy of disruption. One of his demarcations, and I think he's stealing it from John Dewey, is the idea that a good education will provoke, will pointedly disrupt kids and put learning experiences in front of them that won't truly just cut their legs out beneath them, but will deliberately challenge them to see the world in different ways or to begin seeing themselves in different ways.

There's the idea that as educators we have the obligation to disrupt kids in kind and gentle ways that they can handle, but to get them out of how they're seeing the world. Any ways in which you've seen or noticed or could speak to the Diploma Program bringing that idea of a pedagogy of disruption to life to try and in best possible ways, jolt kids to learn?

Administrator 1: Pretty limited. I don't see lots of opportunities for that in the IB. Again, it gets back to the agency question, because the more that kids can be given the opportunity to be autonomous learners, the more they can be put in position to be challenged and to challenge themselves, but I don't see a lot of that. As I said, it's within limited means. Again, every subject is different, so I would also say that it depends on the subject, but the way the IB is structured, it's overall intention from as far as I can tell, is not to do that. Ultimately, it's a progressive sausage model. If you think of [unintelligible 00:16:12], it's still a sausage it's just got some nice window dressing.

Interviewer: Again, this is to gently prod, not to lead, the degree to which Theory of Knowledge or CAS or the Extended Essay, through those three vehicles, is there any significant disruption? Does it integrate well beyond those three things in isolation?

Administrator 1: I think that they're probably the most open-ended aspects of the IB.

Thankfully the IB is trying to free up CAS so that it wasn't so hours driven and that sort of thing, which is an improvement. In general, all three of those areas are ways in which kids can be more independent because the requirements are a lot broader and not so limiting.

Those three are parts of the program, I think succeed more than in the other part.

Although I don't see them very much integrated into the rest of the program. There have more stands like, "Okay, I have to take Theory of Knowledge, I have CAS requirements and I'm required to do an Extended Essay." They don't feel like they come, they flow, they're organically connected to the other parts of the program.

Interviewer: One thing you mentioned earlier is the idea that the learner profile is an add on, and then listening to you, I know you didn't say this, but there's something in terms of the CAS component, the Extended Essay, TLK, they also seem a little bit of add-ons, and there are a little bit further. Do you think it's because if the accountability piece that the add-on of the CORE is actually brought to life? Is that what's missing in the learner profile or is it that may be a more fundamental overall has to be there to make sure that those pieces are truly interwoven into the entire structure? Could it be the case?

Administrator 1: Fundamental overhaul. It really does require a completely different approach because it's not starting with the outcome of empowered learners, that's not the intent of the program. It may be the stated intent in certain ways, and it's not you always know how much it's stated, but it's not really geared towards that purpose. If you use the definition you've described of a good education, I don't think that's the purpose of the IB.

Interviewer: How well do you think the Diploma Program educates students to become reflective of self, critical of self and also reflective and critical of their broader society. Society could be obviously the school, it could be life in PORG, it could be global environments. How well does it produce or spit out self-aware, critically-aware individuals, but also members of a community?

Administrator 1: Let me put it to you this way if we took away the IB and we just offered continuum, because we don't offer PYP or MYP which are also add-ons to the Diploma Program, in my view. If we took away the IB and we just add a continuum of our own curriculum, I think that kids will feel a lot better. I think it gets in their way; I don't think it provides any of those things. I think an international school, true international school that is focused on, call it international-mindedness and intercultural understanding and all of the laudable things that the IB and schools are trying to achieve, I think those things are achieved because of how the school is structured not because of the IB. Certainly in a school like ISP, I think it actually hinders, doesn't particularly help.

Now, having said that, I think it does depend on the school and the context of that school because I'm certain that the IB Diploma in certain contexts can help a school move in the right direction. The school like ISP, it gets in the way. I know that many of my colleagues wouldn't agree with that. For my perch, in my post topical perspective, I believe that we can do a hell of a lot better.

Interviewer: In that case, is it a function of the size of the school, the stability of the school? In terms of you in that perch, what are some of the things that help make it such that you could do it better or conversely, what are some of the things that could allow a school to move forward using the Diploma Program?

Administrator 1: ISP on the continuum of schools, is a fairly progressive school with very strong aspirations of challenging the traditional model of schooling. Given that it's on that side of the continuum, it gets out ahead of the diploma's aspiration. It's not about the size of the school, it's probably about we're diverse by design. We have more than 60 nationalities, no one nationality dominates the school. We have created an environment and culture with that basic building block as well as our own philosophy that allows for diversity and so on. Then we are very intentional about our curriculum.

We're intentional about challenging ourselves and being on the progressive end of project-based learning, learning by doing, experiential learning, learner autonomy, empowered learners, where every learner is empowered, every learner has a seat at the table. That's our talk and we attempt to walk that talk. Given that that's the kind of school we are, it doesn't really

matter how big we are, it's more about the underpinnings and the evolution of the school [unintelligible 00:22:52] at the school. It's been very intentional. That's who we are as a community and therefore we're out ahead of the IB.

The IB holds us back. In the school where you come from a more conservative model, a more traditional model where it's all chalk and talk and it's heavily grade driven and a lot of practices are not in place, there are programs like the EYP and YP diploma can help springboard the school and push it in the right direction.

Interviewer: In what ways, if any, does the diploma program provide opportunities for students to truly challenge and change themselves or communities?

Administrator 1: I think the biggest opportunity is around CAS, depending on how the school treats it because there the kids can have a lot the choice in what they want to pursue and that can have, if done well, a profound change on them and on the community. I think that's primarily where you'll see it. I don't think you'll see it anywhere else that I'm aware of. I think there's theoretical aspects of other parts. You can maybe see it in Extended Essay or TLK, to some extent. That's more internalized. In terms of an external impact, I think it comes out in CAS.

Interviewer: Then two last questions, do you, and then if you do, to what degree does the diploma program empower students to engage in higher-order thinking, evaluation, analysis, synthesis? To what degree does it bring that to life purposefully, methodically? Are there ways in which it's truly expected through the diploma program or is it a function more of who's in front of them as teachers?

Administrator 1: Again, I think it's both. I also think the program has some aspects of that absolutely. There is an intention to try to do that. Usually, it depends on the teacher because if you're just jumping through the hoops and following the script, you're not going to get at that. If it's all about how do I get a seven on the IB? If that's the driver, then it'll limit the amount of critical thinking and so on. You can get a seven without going very far beyond the boundaries.

In that sense, the way the program is structured in such a way that you can jump through the hoops and not go very far as a learner and still succeed in terms of the external measure. I also think that there's an attempt to learn beyond the superficial level. I also think it depends on the course as I was mentioning earlier, certain subjects tend to be less innovative and less pushing the boundaries and that has a lot to do with the people who are involved with creating those courses and what course has to be under review at any particular time.

The progress is pretty slow because it's still trying to work within this old model. There are opportunities for that within every curriculum, some very much more than others. There are structural aspects of the IB of all the courses that allow for that, that want that but it usually depends on the teacher.

Interviewer: You mentioned earlier that arts maybe was a little bit freer a little bit more open in terms of student choice and agency and maybe by implication, higher-order thinking skills. You mentioned biology being a little bit more closed, for example, having the multiple-choice. Any other examples of courses or subjects that are a little bit more closed by nature?

Administrator 1: Yes, you could think through the different courses. I believe chemistry, in the sciences, falls into that as well. My guess is that certain of the math programs, although there's an attempt to change math which is positive. We're running all four math programs unless you're doing that, and intentionally so that we can have more avenues for kids. I think that history is a rather closed program even though there are maybe avenues for that, there's maybe some choice built into it, but I think it's pretty strict in terms of even those avenues there's a strict pathway in there.

Probably econ is another example of that as well. Honestly, I don't know enough about the languages to know for certain. I'm just scrolling through the different programs. I don't know. That's as much as I could venture.

Interviewer: In terms of the limiting of higher-order thinking skills or we're not mandating it, because you mentioned the idea that you can get through, get a seven and still be quite within the boundaries, do you think it's mostly a function of the accountability that limits students' access?

Administrator 1: It's the requirements of the course. The teacher can say to the student, if you want a seven, you need to answer in this way on the exam. If you want a seven, these are the required things you need to do. The IB is about compliance. A lot of the IB is about compliance, just as traditional school is primarily about compliance. As long as you have a system that is so compliance-driven-you can use the term accountability, it's a little bit of a different term, but I'll use the word compliance-there are all these requirements that you have to follow.

If you follow those requirements, you'll generally do pretty well in the IB. Now, it is true even if you strictly follow the requirements, you can have a range of performances. Some kids are going to get a four or a five and some kids are going to get a six or a seven, but there's higher likelihood that you'll do better if you stick to the requirements and feed back to the IB what it's expecting of you. We have many examiners or senior examiners at the school. They know what the expectations of the IB are and they'll teach to that requirement and expectation.

Interviewer: In the broad level descriptor of a seven, it asks students to apply knowledge in new and novel ways, so it's there exclusively in theory, but then I guess I'm just checking. What I'm hearing or what I'm wondering is, while it's there prescriptively in design, to actually get through the course, you don't necessarily have to do that to meet that highest level.

Administrator 1: I think the teacher if they're good, can point the kids in the direction of what might be a novel and new way of approaching something. It's like what does the examiner want to see? In that sense, it can be a trap. Some kids are going to be better at that than others, but it's still about compliance, it's still about a requirement or it's a trick of how to get those marks and a good teacher paying attention or the teacher who is skilled at pointing those out to kids and training kids in that direction, those kids will tend to get the sixes and sevens.

Within that there is still a range, so some will do better than others. It depends on the examiner as well, but that is built into the system.

Interviewer: You mentioned the idea of depending on the examiner, to what degree do you think the systems of accountability, in terms of truly reaching what the IB puts out in theory, are limited by, you mentioned the idea that it's an organization, they're just putting out sausage, to what degree are the examiners just bits of sausage? Is it the design that breaks down or is it the human implementation thereof?

Administrator 1: No, it's this concept of form follows function. I think the design is driving the end result, so it's driving the students, it's driving the teachers, it's driving the examiners because they're all working towards the outcome of the design of the program.

Interviewer: To paraphrase, teaching to a test isn't necessarily a bad thing if you're teaching to the right test. What I partially hear you saying is it's maybe a bit of a better test to teach to compared to some other options, but fundamentally what I'm hearing you saying, it's still teaching to the wrong test. We need to design a different test, different outcomes to drive how we get there.

Administrator 1: I wouldn't put it that way. We're talking about school; we're not talking about flying an airplane or driving a car. The reason I make that distinction is because there

are certain kinds of skills that require certain kinds of tests, but learning in a school environment has different outcomes and objectives than what I just described, so I think it's unlikely that there is never going to be a good enough test that you can teach to. The problem is not teaching, it's not about the test; it's not about creating. To paraphrase someone else, it's not about building a faster horse because ultimately the problem is that it's about the test, not about the learning. It's this idea of the backward design where we need to be clear. Even in backward design, you start with your learning outcome, not the assessment. Furthermore, the assessment is customized to the learning outcomes as opposed to something that's static.

As soon as you refer to the idea of a test, you're referring to something that is pretty static. While the IB may tweak its exam every year, it's potentially a static exam that it is applying to tens of thousands of students. Their school and learning requires a nimbleness that a program like the IB will never be able to deliver because it is kept safe. If the IB were deconstructed or redesigned or transformed, it would be a lot more nimble and agile, it would be a lot more flexible, it would have much broader parameters and criteria that would meet the needs of each individual learner.

There would be a lot more latitude to apply the criteria so that every learner can have their own customized curriculum within the IB, so they can demonstrate their learning in different ways. Part of the problem with the IB is that every course has the same standard. It's like the ultimate of every course is getting a seven, so the perfect IB student gets a 45 because you multiply seven times six and then you add the other distant bobs and there, ipso facto, you've got a 45, and that is the sausage model. It may be a fancy sausage but it's still a sausage model of the curriculum because everything is equally applied ultimately because the equality is the number.

It's a seven, a seven, a seven and a seven and so on. Regardless of what course you're taking, it's a seven. Then within each course it is a requirement to get to that seven. On top of that, there are requirements about higher level, standard level. There are requirements at a very low level. To give you an example, the IB should be a lot more fluid than this, if a student wants to do two arts, double up on the arts or excel in a particular area, they can't because this program, you can't get a diploma that way, so you are forced into those boxes, into those silos so it limits your options.

The very nature of the program is limiting and the test no matter how well structured they are, they're in service of what I just described as opposed to customizing the assessment to really meet the needs of each learner. I'm sure that would scare the bejeezus of the IBB or any organization because by its nature you're a bureaucracy, so you have to be rethinking the whole approach, and it's not in a place to do that.

Interviewer: The last question. In terms of students and their abilities to, hopefully, if they are able to engage in higher-order thinking skills, are there ways in which the program actually expects students to create knowledge? Are there ways in which there's something in the program design, in terms of assessment, in terms of the courses, in terms of the core requirements? Are there ways in which as a program, it's actually asking students and wanting students to create?

Administrator 1: Within the limits of what I described, within a very limited scope, yes. Every class has some component that allows for some of that knowledge creation some more areas more than others but it's intentionally in the design of the IB, but I would posit that that's a very small component of the IB. It's not a major feature of the IB.

Interviewer: Any key way in which that's brought to life? I don't want to lead you. Any examples that are concrete in terms of bringing that to life?

Administrator 1: Well, on one side if you have the Extended Essay, there is a huge amount of choice and the intention is for a student to do original research and thinking so there that's

a major feature. Even though I would argue it's a pretty inflexible structure, but within that inflexible structure, its intention is to give a lot of latitude which is cooperative. Within most of the subject areas, there is always a component of choice whether it's reading or certain IAs or there is a subject component that kids are expected to do and in there they have some choice.

If you look at math's studies, for example, there are lots of options for kids to do more open-ended kinds of projects and research which I think is quite positive. On the spectrum, something like math that you should see more of that, or music, or the arts again you'll see more of that, or in film, or in theater, you'll see more of that than you will in other so-called more academic area.

Interviewer: It's there, but it's not driving the heart of the program.

Administrator 1: No. I wouldn't characterize the IB on that basis. I'd say that it's a small component of the IB. I think the Extended Essay is a good example to look at because there it's probably most pronounced in certain ways or CAS it's most pronounced, but it's still very tightly controlled in that unfortunately it hampers creativity. It's academic research paper you have to do. I don't think that's necessary.

Frankly, I think the personal project you can open that up so much more, and still have rigorous criteria that allow for a hell of a lot more innovation in new ways, novel ways, to approach new knowledge and research and those kinds of things.

Interviewer: Two quick practical questions. I think in your grade 11 and grade 12 classes in terms of the number of students who are doing the diploma program, is it roughly 60 kids per year?

Administrator 1: It's about 70 at this point.

Interviewer: Okay. I should know this; I think your years of involvement in the diploma program--

Administrator 1: Wait, sorry. It's 70 or so, and it's usually about 70 to 80%, 85% who do the full diploma.

Interviewer: Got you. Thank you. Is it fair to say that I think it's probably 25ish years you've been working with the diploma program?

Administrator 1: Yes. [laughs] You would know.

Interviewer: Yes, sure. The last question that I need to ask, any questions in terms of what I will do with the data? Any questions or concerns in terms of how this information will be shared?

Administrator 1: I'm assuming my answers are anonymized.

Interviewer: Yes, there'll be no reference to you directly. There'll be no reference to your school directly. There should be nothing and there will be nothing that ties any of your responses back to you, to PORG. The only thing that will be tied back is the rough size of the school. I'll make reference to you as being director, your years of experience working with a diploma program, but in every way possible, all the information will be made anonymous. Technically, the dissertation will be made public through the University of Bath. It will be there, so anybody technically could access it. If there's anything you're wanting me not to share in terms of information, I can strike certain parts.

Administrator 1: No. There's nothing I said that I haven't said before in different ways, although it's fun to dive a little bit deeper by having this kind of conversation. How many people have you interviewed [crosstalk]?

Interviewer: You're the fourth so far. My goal is I'm trying to get to 16 people.

Administrator 1: Okay. I'd be interested to know where I fall on the spectrum. I haven't come across many people who tend to be as critical as I am. They may be critical about different aspects of the program, but I'm wondering whether you've come across this level of criticism.

Interviewer: So far, no. My hunch is probably I won't. For most people, I don't think they see it as the same sausage, and I like that analogy. Fundamentally, I think it is the same sausage it's just packaged a little bit nicer. This is just me going off, I think one of the things that people really struggle with, you have a comfort with ambiguity that I think many don't. I think there's fundamentally something about teachers that don't like ambiguity.

My real challenge is we need to build a different sausage. We need to become vegan. I don't know what the analogy is, but I don't think there are much--

Administrator 1: We need to get rid of the sausage, Interviewer, no sausage.

Interviewer: Not even vegan sausage, fair enough. I don't think most people can handle the lack of structure that I think is needed. Then from a practical point in terms of my job, or your job, I think it's really important that kids are allowed flexibility and choice. At the end of the day, I think one of the ways the US breaks down is everybody that applies to any school of a decent level, they all have perfect GPAs?

The answer is probably we don't, how do we get any kind of controlled level of what is quality, and what does it mean? If we brought to life the Extended Essay in a way that's local here and we allowed flexibility-- Remember Andrew Nicholson, my first year with a personal project in Bucharest? He was so incensed because his student he gave them a seven. It was the best project he's ever seen.

Then I gently prodded and well, it's because he worked hard, and the product wasn't great. The process wasn't great, but Andrew liked the kid, and they met a ton. I don't know, how do we provide any sorts of accountability to people beyond our setting without it being a sausage?

Administrator 1: Well, we need to get rid of grades and GPAs.

Interviewer: Fair enough. There're some schools that do that, that have a history maybe like yours and so kids who graduate from certain private schools in the US, they don't care about grades. "If you made it in and made it out of the school, we want you." At the end of the day, we do have this sorting feature, how do we get kids into university?

Administrator 1: There's the Mastery Transcript Consortium, do you know about them?

Interviewer: No.

Administrator 1: Go look them up, MTC, Mastery Transcript Consortium. It's a group of US and international schools that are creating a portfolio-based transcript, so that what's presented to universities is not grades, but a demonstration of learning and showing how far kids have been able to achieve without using grades. There are movements out there. This is the first year where some schools are actually presenting graduates with this new portfolio system. That's one example.

The point is that it goes back to what's the purpose of education? What's the purpose of school? The purpose of school, there may have been a time where the assembly line approach was what the purpose was, but that shouldn't be the purpose anymore. It's not really meeting the needs of the society and it's not meeting the needs of each individual learner, so schools can create new systems in university. It's the chicken and the egg problem.

It's like, "Well, we can't change because universities want x, y and z." We are part of that system. The system doesn't start and end anywhere. It's a continuous system that doesn't have a beginning or an end, and so all of us are contributing to how the system functions. That can be changed, and it has to be.

Interviewer: Where you are and what's happening in PORG and maybe a few other schools, you're in a position where you could do that.

Administrator 1: Interviewer, that's been 12 years of work. I didn't arrive in PORG.

Interviewer: That's my point, though, is you're in a position primarily because of your continuity there, teachers' continuity there, the awareness, the drive, the want of it. Two weeks ago, I went to this school in Ouagadougou for a visit. They're 17 years away from just

getting the diploma program to life, let alone to that radical transition. A school can do it definitely and a school on the right setting can do it.

If you are there and you've done what you've done in PORG, in the next three years, you could move away from the diploma program, jump into this and your parent body wouldn't miss a beat, your kids wouldn't suffer at all, but we can't do that.

Administrator 1: That wouldn't even happen in PORG, but let's not make a virtue out of a necessity. I think one of the challenges that we have in schools and the school leaders, is that we make a virtue out of a necessity. The IB may be a necessity because of pressures from the parent community and whatever other reason, but let's not make a virtue out of the things we have to do. Let's not make a virtue out of grading.

We know what the research says about grades and so it's not good. It's limits risk-taking. If the learner profile says risk-taking and you have to do a grade and we know that the grade limits risk-taking, then we have an internal contradiction. All I'm saying is that we need to pay attention to the research. We need to do what we do with our eyes open and not make a virtue out of it even in a school. Also, schools can leapfrog. What I said earlier about there are schools where the IB can be beneficial, I would also say that schools can also leapfrog the IB and we can ignore it and get to a much better place without it. The IB even with a school in earlier development, if they have the right leadership, wouldn't necessarily need the IB. It actually could hold the school back, and so it depends on the context.

Interviewer: How do you do that at a national level? How do you do that at a bigger picture though? That's something that I don't know.

Administrator 1: What do you mean at a national level?

Interviewer: Well, I think with the right people working with the right schools, like you were suggesting earlier, it could be organically brought forth. I think the reality of finding the right people to lead and staff and bring that to life across a state in the US or the UK, how do you fundamentally overhaul education at that level?

Administrator 1: I think that's also about leadership. I think you have to have a battle at every level, so at a national level or a local city level or whatever, there are reformers who have to have those battles and take a stand and then be smart enough strategically to implement those changes.

It's always imperfect and messy, never going to be smooth, but I think it's doable. Frankly, I'll say further, that the changes that we envision, where school should go, is inevitable. Just the question of whether we're going to ride the wave or be--

Interviewer: Swept up by it.

Administrator 1: Right, so I think that's inevitable. School is going to become more and more irrelevant to learners because as we know, they have access. We no longer have a monopoly of knowledge and they often can know more than the teacher or find out whatever they need to learn without a teacher. What's the added value of school? It has to be a very different model. Kids are going to vote, and families are going to vote with their kids.

They're going to find other solutions that are going to be more online, or just different ways of doing things and schools are going to be forced to change eventually, but I'd rather not be dragged kicking and screaming. I'd rather be in the vanguard of that, but it's possible at a school level and you're right, at a systemic level, at an IB level, ask a question. Your question applies to the IB. How can the IB re-imagine itself and transform how it's structured? It's damn hard.

Interviewer: Thank you, Administrator 1.

Administrator 1: All right, bye.

Interviewer: Thank you.

Anonymized Interview Transcript – Administrator 2 – February 28, 2020

Biographical Overview – Administrator 2

Position: Director of School

Years in Position: 6

Years Working with IBDP: 24

Number of Students in IBDP Program @ Current School: 100

Interviewer: In terms of an introduction, the dissertation investigates the impact of neoliberal educational reform on national school systems like in the UK or US and is looking into the implications the measures of accountability have on teaching and learning. The purpose is to ultimately test the degree to which the IBDP in international school schools is able to provide a similar level of accountability and then investigate the degree to which the IBDP provides a good education.

The first part of the interview is more focused and follows up on a few points raised from the questionnaire in terms of the accountability piece. Then the main part of the interview looks at the degree to which the IB Diploma Programme can bring to life or does bring to life in its design a good education. The questions get at elements of what a good education could be or could look like.

Anything I ask if you have any clarifying questions, ask away. I'm happy to obviously add detail or explain or expand anything you're needing explained or expanded. In total, it shouldn't take too long, around 45 minutes.

Please note that I am recording our conversation and will ultimately turn it into an anonymized transcript that will be submitted with the final dissertation. If there is anything you would not like recorded, please let me know.

Administrator 2: Will do.

Interviewer: The first question has to do with measures of accountability in the IB Diploma Programme. The framing question is, to what degree do you find that there is accountability in the IB Diploma Programme in providing true measures of assurance for the quality of teaching and learning? To what degree do you feel that as a parent who had a son go through or sons go through the program, did you feel like there were ways- or as a teacher teaching, were there ways to truly have some kind of check and balance for the overall quality?

Administrator 2: I think the quality assurance is that it is external. It's not just the opinions of the teachers. I think there's always some form of potential implicit bias when you're assessing your own students. I think the IBO has taken some good steps in terms of the quality assurance of the validity of the assessments by the examiners. I think the online training, the embedding of dummy papers within the process provides a bit of reassurance around it. I know this is going to be foolproof and anytime you use humans, you're going to have variation.

I wonder and worry about the sheer growth of the IB and their ability to have enough qualified examiners. The requirements of being an examiner are not that high of a bar, even to the fact that you don't even have to be an IB teacher to be an examiner, but at the end of the day, I think some of the systems they have in place, I think that in terms of when they do band marking, was it a six? I think there's reasonable surety that a six is a six or a four is a

four. How many points within that are always going to vary, but I would say because I've been leading IB schools now for 13 years. I'd say it's better today than it was back in their mid-2000s before they started doing the online examination orientation and the dummy papers.

Interviewer: External exams are one of three ways. There's true quality assurance, are there other ways within the IB Diploma Program that you feel as a director or as a parent when you had your kids go through, that you could get something a little more objective in terms of assuring the quality? Other measures, other systems?

Administrator 2: If you actually dig into the statistical bulletins and see that there hasn't been much variation around some of their scores, one could argue that's a sense of it. The interesting is, the average score is by exam. So, for example, math HL or chemistry SL do move, and that's one of my wonders. I'm not sure if that's good or bad, but obviously each group of kids is going to be different and the cohorts in some exams aren't large enough. In theory, if you're doing it right, the English SL scores in literature, for example, should not change year to year. If your standard's your standard, a five or a 23 in this paper should be a 23 around the world. I tend to be a bit skeptical around it because of that. I just really wonder about the ability to have 70,000 different students or even more, whatever it is 700, whatever number of students it is to accurately assess them year on year because your examiners change as well.

My short answer would be, I don't think there's an absolute around it, I think you have to take it with a little bit of a, not a grain of salt, but a little bit of skepticism, which, and I think it may or may not really related question. I think that's one of the reasons why I'm not a proponent of having such fine distinctions. Universities do that. You need a seven on an HL to get into this university or six or whatever the case may be. I just don't know that I have as much faith in the assessment system to be that fine. The idea that some Canadian universities say, okay, you got to be within four points of your predicted in a total, I think there's one way that you can factor that out.

Interviewer: I'm not going to lead you too much. To what degree do you feel comfortable as a director that the authorization and reauthorization program helps assure true quality of delivery program?

Administrator 2: To be really candid, I don't think it does. The authorization program, I think is to put the key parts in place, but the real quality assurance is in the teacher. Now the teacher is able to accurately assess is their instruction best practices or do they have the best practices of assessment, do they have the content knowledge that they need, et cetera, et cetera. The authorization and reauthorization process doesn't even touch any of that.

Interviewer: It appears lots of it's contextually driven in terms of what a school brings to life, in terms of who the teachers are, how the teachers are monitored.

Administrator 2: Most certainly. I think the reauthorization definitely is a paperchase around that piece. Yes, I wouldn't say it is a quality control. If it is, it's the minimum. I see it more as, do you have the fundamentals in place in which to deliver the program? Do you have an extended essay program? Do you have enough resources to support the program? Do you have people who have the initial training? It's all the minimum standard, the floor of it all.

Interviewer: One of the things that I'm looking into researching, comparing and contrasting what happens in some typical national systems, there's such pressure to meet the demands of an externally standardized exam that it's hard for teachers to know the kids, to differentiate the kids, to be innovative in terms of the pedagogy. Within the IB Diploma Program, they are the measures of accountability, primarily the exams. In terms of your experiences, to what degree have those externally standardized exams limited teachers' abilities to truly

differentiate for kids, to know their kids and or to be innovative in practice in terms of employing best practices?

Administrator 2: Well, it obviously eliminates curricular freedom. It is the ultimate teaching to the test and that's neither good nor bad. That's just is. If you're doing the program, you're accepting that. Unlike, say, the PYP, which you have more freedom. I don't know. I can think of very specific examples of teachers who have really made their programs come to life. Tory in terms of what she undertook in terms of developing IB history for Africa. She had great academic freedom to do that.

I worry sometimes, I think the literature that the language parts of it, I think are all strong and allow that because, again, you can pick what books you want to pick. I think the sciences and the maths, much less so. There are certain things that you know are going to be on the test. There are certain things that the kids have to be able to do. It's not a program you can personalize the kids outside of, say, extended essay. Is it okay? Because there is that set body of knowledge around it.

My short answer is, it varies based on your discipline. I think it's discipline specific. Certainly, humanity is to have a lot more freedom around it. I've never felt that it restricted the ability of teachers to get to know kids. It's the time, it's the interest you take in them. I do think to some degree within the IB, I think class size is more of an impact, say, at a Grade 9 English class. I think the one thing that the IB has been thinking about and looking at, but I haven't really seen any definitive change, is the impact on the program on the student social, emotional, mental well-being and the stress factor of it.

I think the hardest part around it you talk about external accountability, the only thing we haven't talked about is parents and the public. It's often the only teacher results that are known. Does that make sense? Whereas even in big schools you may only have one IB chemistry teacher or one-- As they get a hold of that information, as they compare notes, in China, the parents used to get together and swap numbers and they could accurately tell you what your averages were. I think that's a degree of pressure which teachers either consciously or subconsciously, most of them pass on to the kids around that because they see it as almost having statistics on the back of our sports cards. How many sevens do you have? How many of this, how many of that?

Again, I think the teacher-- In the ability to build relationships, I think that's the cloud that hovers over it, but most of the teachers I've worked with I think it doesn't impact around that. I think the sciences and maths, in particular, I think they are academic freedom declines. I think unfortunately in some of the HL classes when the issues we've talked about in terms of hours as a sense to cover curriculum, and in that sense, I think they default a more lecture style. Sadly, because when you see what's preached in the PYP and the MYP in terms of inquiry-based student agency having control of the learning, I think that goes away in many areas because the teachers feel like they can't give them on a time to that.

Interviewer: Then for the first part, more snapshot impressions. At a broad level, to what degree do you feel the IB Diploma Program prepares kids thoroughly for success in university? One, academically and then two, socially-emotionally?

Administrator 2: Academically, anecdotally, and it's over the years, even as a parent, almost to a student everyone says, "The first year of university is easier than the last year of IB." I think that's a product of the academic rigor. Now, again, my lens is to international schools, although the comments have been shared by colleagues within that. So I think they are academically prepared. I think it is a better preparation for a lot of universities because the ability to analyze, write well, critically think is all there rather than regurgitation of fact, but I think even perhaps more so is time management.

When you get to university, what I happen to see is our kids take six courses, plus TOK, plus extended essay, plus applying to college, plus playing on sports teams. When you get to

university, generally you have four, maybe five classes. You're actually overall academic load of lessons, you have a lot more time in your hands, which is good and bad. I'd say the time management piece, learning how to balance that all out, schedules it out, I think there's a lot more freedom. There's a lot less teacher handholding. So, I think academically they're very well prepared.

Social-emotionally, I guess because they're dealing with the academic rigor and go through it, there's some help. I mean, it's not easy, so you have that preparation. In a system that's done well, I think they do have a more worldly view. Their scope's not as narrow, and I think that's beneficial. How it impacts them social-emotionally, I don't know. Again, it'd be hard for me to separate the fact that they're third culture kids coming from an international setting into what degree does them, having that worldly view, how much of that is being a third culture kid in an international school as part of the IB.

Interviewer: Are there elements within the program that you see that are purposely designed to help students do well social-emotionally in the diploma program?

Administrator 2: No. I think they're paying lip service right now, but I haven't seen anything substantial and I've never seen them come down with anything around what counselors should do. I think they could do a lot of stuff around the core group if they wanted to, in terms of having things on self-care, mindfulness, wellness. They used to argue, back in the day, back when they counted hours, that the 50 hours of activity was meant to be for my wellness, but 50 hours over two years is a joke.

Interviewer: You mentioned the idea earlier perhaps because of their third culture kids, by function of where they are, who they are, who their parents are, they are better up to speed in terms of making social-emotional adjustments. In terms of their abilities socially to adapt into the university, is it parents who say that it's more school context rather than the diploma program purposely bringing that to life?

Administrator 2: Yes, because I don't see anything in the idea of a framework for that. I mean, there just isn't. If there was, then you would-- For example, schools have like ours, middle school has an advisory program where you have a distinct curriculum, you can actually look at the scope and sequence of events. Elementary school guidance lessons, you can see that out. I think if the IBO really wanted to do that, then you would have that laid out, and through a core block or through some time from TOK or whatever the case may be, they could dictate that, and I don't see any element of that.

Once again, one of their favorite things is they like to lay things down and say, "These are the recommendations," and they don't even do that. You can imagine with their resources, both human and financial, they actually came down and said, over the two-year program, schools have to provide, and I'm making up numbers, 20 hours on health wellness, mindfulness, whatever the case may be taught by somebody who-- because they could mandate the training, they do that and everything else. Mandated by a person who has this background and this training, who can actually deliver that.

Interviewer: It could be the case as with CAS, it's a requirement, and there's accountability piece because kids must do these things. So, they must do the social-emotion.

Administrator 2: Definitely.

Interviewer: The second part has several questions in terms of getting a criteria that according to a few different people suggest a good education. Again, the idea is ways in which the IB Diploma Program by design purposely brings that to life. Earlier you spoke about the idea of student agency and independence in they're learning. To what degree does the diploma program purposefully bring that-- Well, I guess the first question is, does it? If so, to what degree and in what ways does it empower, educate kids, expect kids to be independent to take control of the learning to have agency?

Administrator 2: I think it's somewhere in the middle. I mean, their curricular requirements in terms of whether it's developing their own experiments, the extended essay, the different parts that they have to do, they give the freedom to the students to do those things. I think within that realm, TOK, extended essay, they can follow a passion. They can follow interest if the students are embracing that. From that side, I think it's there. The idea of students taking ownership of their learning is built into the program, and I'm not sure if it's purposeful or about if it's by design or by the framework.

This idea that you're dealing with-- One of the things we talk about is resilience and advocacy. One of the things that they see in terms of a successful university is the ability of a student to advocate for themselves to the point of if you have a struggle, go to office hours with a professor. Is there an academic learning center? Is there a peer writing center? Those types of things. The idea that "Okay, I don't get it, but how can I get around it?"

I think by introducing the academic rigor that it does at a younger age and in a more of a structured format, hopefully, the schools have complimentary services that help teach the kids that. It's not a matter of when they're younger somebody coming up to say, "Okay, you need extra help. Here is the extra help," as opposed to, "This is what you need to know. If you don't know it, how are you going to get there?" and looking around, again, whether it's extra hours with the teacher, office hours, getting extra help, utilizing peer resources or what have you.

Again, by design or by circumstance, I don't know. I think it definitely doesn't. In my personal experience, it definitely doesn't. I think that's part of the issue of kids being better prepared for university. When I was doing my doctoral program, one of the women in my cohort, her dissertation was on students who received academic support at university level. What she found in her study was that students who, in general, in large numbers, the students who utilize the academic support centers had a higher overall GPA than the students who didn't.

The hypothesis behind that is you have a lot of kids going to universities who found school relatively easy. They hit the wall and they didn't know how to get around it, and they just thought they were too dumb, or they couldn't do it. Whereas if you have a kid who did that a Grade 9 or 10 and learned that, "Okay, just because I don't know it now it doesn't mean I'm never going to learn it. There are things I can do, either myself or with the help of others to overcome that." I think very few students walk out of the IB saying, "That was easy." I think everyone in their own way will hit their wall at some point.

Interviewer: Yes, and then find a way over-under. One of the ideas [unintelligible 00:21:23] he talks about the idea of having a pedagogy of disruption. His idea is or his main idea is the idea that a good education is one that kind of pokes at a kid and gets them to challenge their sense of normalcy, challenge their ways of being, of doing, of seeing the world. To what degree is the IBDP in its design poking kids and purposely through its pedagogy through what does asking kids to do in class, for example, does it poke them and get them to challenge who they are?

Administrator 2: I agreed with everything you said up until the last sentence, the last phrase about that. I think given the nature of the rigor, given the fact that in its purest form you're teaching through university-level classes, it's going to push units. We've certainly seen kids over time who just kind of breeze through Grades 1 through 10 and they hit 11 and 12 and they're finally like, "Oh," and a lot of them, and my daughter included, was like, "Okay, I'm ready for this challenge. I've wanted to ake this challenge," which we constantly remind them when they're frustrated because of what's going on around it.

I think in that sense of disruptive, pushing them outside their comfort zone, that cognitive dissonance, I think it does. I think the fact that it's global in the sense of you're touching all disciplines, I think allows it to do that because you are going to have kids who may be more

humanities kids or more math science kids. I think by expecting high things for them in all areas, I think it does that.

There's certain overwriting things that the holistic nature of it, I think helps as well. There are themes that they're going to hit in social studies or science or this that cross over. Again, I think it could be a better connection around it. Again, done at its purest form, I think the extended essay does that. It really challenges the students to come up and truly try to come up with the original idea. TOK, I think is probably the best example of that because it really does question, how do you know what you know?

I think a lot of times kids grow up, unfortunately, aided by the education, saying that they're absolute facts. While there are facts, which tend to be very common base-level knowledge, I think there's a difference between a fact and the truth. I'd agree in terms of the theory and knowledge, I think it's an excellent example of how that plays out.

It challenges who they are. I think if the students actively embrace it and reflect upon what their learning and can [unintelligible 00:24:06] do that-- As a parent, I saw that with some of the literature that was chosen. I think if you truly, again, for our student body, if you truly-- the way I push kids out is not going with the traditional Western Caucasian authors. I think if you're looking at using it to look at authors from Pakistan or West Africa or whatever, and see how they view the world, I think they can do that.

Interviewer: Another basic kind of criteria of defining elements of a good education, it's getting kids to become critically reflective, but also reflective of the various communities. Be it some community within your Grade 12 student, within your high school, your ISD critical of broader West African region. To what degree did you or have you seen or have you sensed the diploma program getting kids to become self-critical, and also critically aware in a healthy sense in terms of self and the various communities.

Administrator 2: I think in broad terms, the program pushes kids, even the best. I think going through the experience does that. I think for some kids, it's a matter of, "I'm not sure if I could do this, and I did it." That's the journey is the learning, not the program. Certainly, you can see many examples of that. I think even if default to my end of two of my two kids, I think we haven't talked about is the quality of the dinner table conversation changed. I think that's a great example, and I've heard that from many other parents.

I think if the kids take it in the truest form-- The interesting idea of it is a global curriculum. I think its greatest opportunity is in places like the United States, or some parts of Europe where they are inward-focused. If you truly embrace a global curriculum, global perspectives, I think it can cause you to question. I think that one element, and I think they expect you to do it, but there's no-- I'm not sure how necessarily [unintelligible 00:26:34], but I'd love to see a component of local issues.

If the history class had to have [inaudible 00:26:43] on the themes, but you had to use your local context, you could do that in economics. Psychology might be a little bit different, but I think there's elements of that if you actually drew that in and required that to be in there.

Imagine if your reading lists had to have an author from your region. I think, in general, it does a nice job with that. I think it certainly changes kids. I think as I said, it's the journey. One of the unique aspects I had as a high school principal in China is that we ran three high school programs. You could do IB-- Actually, it was four. IB, AP, both or neither. Literally, you could have a side-by-side comparison. You could never publicly say it, but I always felt like the IB kids just had a different perspective as opposed to AP, which is more of a US-centric, at the time, regurgitation of facts as opposed to somebody critically discuss. I think of the available programs at the moment, the IB does the best job of it.

Interviewer: Then the hope is if after becoming a little bit more critically aware of societies, kids will learn to do something that they'll act. To what degree does the diploma program

empower or provide or expect opportunities for students to act based upon the needs that they discover from that reflection?

Administrator 2: Again, I'm going to be critical in this one in that I think they pay lip service to it, but they don't allow the space for it. I think they talk about CAS. In its purest form, you're supposed to come up with this world-changing event or action. I think that some students do it in their own little way. I think we've had examples here of kids and I've had examples in China where kids honestly do it. There's two issues around it. One is, where does it go beyond that one thing? Is there a way for it to become continuous and sustainable? Could you have the same thing with kids year after year taking it?

If you imagine a school had five projects in the next year of CAS kids could do that. The bottom-line issue and I've seen that in both the schools and others I've heard of it is, the sheer volume of academic workload prevents the kids from having the time to do actually meaningful service work. Presumably, we want them to do all the other good things we want to do play on sports, act in the play, be a kid, not burn out. It just gets squeezed out. That's just the bottom line.

Interviewer: You meant that in conjunction with the idea of providing space for it. Does that come down to at the end of the day teaching to that test dimension earlier and that accountability and your sports card with the number on it?

Administrator 2: No, it definitely it is. Again, it's the whole thing around the hours. I guess, from an organization standpoint, they said, "This is our recommendations, you figure it out." Schools, other than a few British schools, I've never seen anybody tackle the SLHL thing. There's this fear of we are dramatically over kids get way too many hours for ourselves. If we presume, I'm making up numbers, SL kids are getting 200 to 210 hours over the time. Imagine if you took all that for the other three classes, what you could do. We're so fearful of going down to the recommendation that it would hurt our scores that we don't change, or we're not creative enough to figure it out, or we're whatever the case may be. If you actually take the global amount of hours available, there's enough hours for both HL and SL. What we've seen and I've known-- Or let me turn this around. What I've never seen, and I'm somewhat surprised, no one has ever published a paper to compare schools based on hours. Imagine a study where you said, "Okay, these are the schools that do 240 hours for HL. These are the ones that do 200. By the IBO spirit, you should have a study-- If you control for all your factors, you should be able to say that 240 hours are going to get you a better number than that, and nobody's ever done it, which again, being the pessimist, I suspect people have tried, they just haven't been all the-- the results haven't borne itself out or they don't want to do the study. Because the IB commissions quite a bit of study, but I've never seen that before.

Interviewer: The last two questions, they're connected. To what degree have you seen, or do you see the diploma program in its design empowering kids, expecting kids to engage in a higher-order thinking skills, evaluation, analysis, synthesis?

Administrator 2: Definitely. I think that's the strongest point. I've seen that across the table in many areas, in all disciplines. Again, as it's laid out, if you're going to do well-- I think the assessments in themselves, I think, expect that. Unlike perhaps other high school exam programs, they give the time to do it. You have this time here. Six questions, pick two. What they're asking you to do-- I think in that sense not only are they teaching that way, not only do they do the training expect that of teachers, but I think their assessments are backing that up.

Interviewer: Any other concrete ways in which it's seeing, or concrete ways through the assessments? Part of it, you mentioned the idea of a choice, because of choice in terms of where they go or where they can dive into. Are there other concrete examples of how those

higher-order thinking skills are brought to life either through the nature of the assessments or the nature of the learning?

Administrator 2: I don't think the extended essay-- The expectations around that when you actually look at the assessment criteria and [unintelligible 00:33:10] what they're expecting to do. That's a definite. Certainly, theory of knowledge and the essay, they have to do with the theory of knowledge is a great thing. I think some of the internal assessments expect it, and the kids have to work to that.

Interviewer: Then the last question, the last criteria of a good education. Finding ways for kids to take their higher-order thinking skills, and then to do something further with it in the idea of truly creating knowledge, of engaging in something new and modern. It's up to them to come up with the next paradigm for physics. That doesn't need to be revolutionary at the global level, but new and novel to the kids. Are the ways that you've seen experienced the diploma program expecting that in its design?

Administrator 2: I think certain subjects in their design, and again, I'll default to literature, for example. I think some of the ways they expected, depending on what the students did up to Grade 10, I think they're going to ask them to look at it in a whole new way around that. I think not so much say in math, it's fairly straightforward around that. I think, again, depending on which psychology, economics or what have you, I think one of the ways that they do is they do allow, to the extent that school can offer it, the students can pick their own choices around that and so they can stretch themselves out.

I think we haven't talked much about the arts programs, but I think the arts programs do a really greater job all the time. Some for better. I think in the visual art, in the IB theater, that a lot of times kids just want to go in and produce, but the artist's notebook, the director's notebook, I think is an excellent example of that. Sadly, the music side of it is more music appreciation, so it gets lost a little bit. IB Film, for example. I think the arts are an excellent example of how that's done where these kids really--

Because I think in those areas, and the other ones are the examples, they really actually start to understand, how do we learn? What are the different ways? That idea of metacognition. I think the artist's notebook, for example, really makes their thinking visible and then ask them to reflect on that. This is what you did here, now you're doing this, how did that change, and why did that change? I think that would be--

First, if you really want to [unintelligible 00:35:41] out, imagine if you did that, and maybe it's there, and I'm just naive around it, around your papers as you went from the beginning to the end. Where if you had this idea where you're looking at how you write in your points, under those aspects of it. There's certainly some of that reflection in the extended essay when you do your final reflections with the kids, and they're talking about, "This is what I knew then and this is what I know now, what changed or how did it change, and why did it--"

What's the journey you're changing?

Interviewer: I think one of the-- It's a statement, not a question, I think one of the challenges and it leads back to the accountability piece in the arts it's needed. It's there, it's formally required, whereas that reflective piece for the extended essay it's not necessarily formally required as part of the accountability. Are there questions that you have based upon any of the questions here?

Administrator 2: No.

Interviewer: Okay. Thank you.

Anonymized Interview Transcript – Administrator 3 – February 17, 2020

Biographical Overview – Administrator 3

Position: Secondary School Principal

Years in Position: 8

Years Working with IBDP: 22

Number of Students in IBDP Program @ Current School: 160

Interviewer: In terms of an introduction, the dissertation investigates the impact of neoliberal educational reform on national school systems like in the UK or US and is looking into the implications the measures of accountability have on teaching and learning. The purpose is to ultimately test the degree to which the IBDP in international school schools is able to provide a similar level of accountability and then investigate the degree to which the IBDP provides a good education.

The first part of the interview is more focused and follows up on a few points raised from the questionnaire in terms of the accountability piece. Then the main part of the interview looks at the degree to which the IB Diploma Programme can bring to life or does bring to life in its design a good education. The questions get at elements of what a good education could be or could look like.

Anything I ask if you have any clarifying questions, ask away. I'm happy to obviously add detail or explain or expand anything you're needing explained or expanded. In total, it shouldn't take too long, around 45 minutes.

Please note that I am recording our conversation and will ultimately turn it into an anonymized transcript that will be submitted with the final dissertation. If there is anything you would not like recorded, please let me know.

Administrator3: No problem recording.

Interviewer: The first question has to do with measures of accountability in the IB Diploma Programme. The framing question is, to what degree do you find that there is accountability in the IB Diploma Programme in providing true measures of assurance for the quality of teaching and learning? To what degree do you feel that as a parent who had a son go through or sons go through the program, did you feel like there were ways- or as a teacher teaching, were there ways to truly have some kind of check and balance for the overall quality?

Administrator3: That's a multifaceted question really.

Interviewer: Sorry.

Administrator 3: That's okay. I think that the quality control if that's were calling it, it definitely helps the perception that the program is equal no matter where you take it. I think the reality of that is still perhaps not as valid. I think and we know some schools here in Bucharest that have the same program and theoretically, the graduates would have the same experience, but I think that that's not necessarily true because context are different and experience with the people facilitating the program are different. I think they do the best job they can to try to have that happen.

They've grown pretty quickly and I'm not sure that they're able to keep that maintained to the level that maybe they would like, or we would like, I would guess. Then you could argue, "Is that really the important part of it?" Don't know. It's quality control really what it's all about.

Interviewer: In reference that you-- what about the students? Imagine there are two schools in the same city of different qualities, at the end of the day if a student who are graduating with a similar points total if you will or any given experience in the class and they both ended up getting top marks in Physics, would that suggest that they're similarly knowledgeable or that level of student if you will is at the same level or could it be the case that even though the exams are there, they're extremely moderated it could've come about in two very different ways suggesting to, I guess, different experiences in education.

Administrator3: I completely agree with that. I think that there's more to school than exams. A student who does well in Physics in one school and the other school could have a really different experience in their educational journey and that's be differently prepared for life or university or whatever comes next for them. I think that's the part that has always driven schools because it's not necessarily always so measurable.

Exam results are somewhat measurable. It has the student learn the information that's in the syllabus and can they give it back to you. That's measurable but the learning experiences of those kids in those communities those learning communities, it's a little bit more challenging to measure because it's all-encompassing.

Interviewer: Then is it fair for you-- Are you suggesting then that the anyways to measure the quality of a school, it's much more contextual, it's much more difficult?

Administrator3: Yes. I think we have the accrediting agencies that give that a go yet as you and I know. Again, it's pretty flawed. We just got back our report and as you read through it, you're looking at it going the agencies came up sometimes with completely opposite results for the same visit, looking at the same data and talking to the same people. I don't know. I don't know if it actually is possible to measure those experiences and again why, I guess. You and I know how long it takes to prepare for any of those visits and if we spent that amount of time improving teaching and learning, I feel it will be better served than sometimes preparing the reports and then doing all the other pieces.

Interviewer: In terms of the Diploma Programme, there are various measures of accountability in place. For example, the curriculum is prescribed, the internal assessment is prescribed, the exams are prescribed. To some degree there's a rigidity in terms of what teachers needs do to, in terms of what schools need to do, and at the same time, there is some flexibility for obviously teachers to bring it to life in different ways and schools to bring it to life in different ways.

In terms of your experience either teaching or is it administrative working with teachers and seeing students learn, to what degree do you feel that the teachers have the flexibility to truly know their students and to teach to the kids who are really in front of them. Is it a curriculum that provides any flexibility there, some flexibility? How well can teachers teach to the people truly who are in front of them?

Administrator3: I feel that that's probably one of the most frustrating parts of the Diploma Programme in that they have the hour constraints. As soon as you put those constraints and the amount of information that's in the syllabus, I feel it adds pressure to teachers and teachers feel they have to cup of content and as soon as that happens then that strains any relationship building that you might try to do.

As you know it impacts your scheduling and so then we're building a schedule not based on what's best for community and our kids but what's best for higher-level hours which is pretty frustrating. Whenever you try to challenge that, they don't like it so much [laughs]. It also

isn't fair. Our schedule right now is under the amount of hours and then you're really putting teachers and kids under pressure for what I think are really good purposes, but a lot of our schools are small enough that our schedules are tied together and that creates to me unfair situations for kids and for teachers.

I'm not sure the IB and the Diploma Programme in particular that's interested in it because those community times are also important for that relationship building which we know if students don't feel they belong then they don't learn. If they don't feel empowered, then they're just going through motions and they lose that joy of learning. I think the pressure reaches down and it starts around Grade 9 and 10 where the curriculum seems to really change and the pressures the teachers put on kids changes as well.

Interviewer: What about teachers in terms of their ability to innovate or employ maybe more progressive or take risks in terms of teaching? Is it similar in terms of their ability to know kids or do they have somewhere latitude there?

Administrator3: I think the best teachers always find a way to know their kids. Some of that it's economic in terms of schools and how big your classes are and how many preps you can give people and all of those other kinds of pressures. I think the truly gifted teachers find ways to innovate and change but again we publish results, parents expect results, students expect results. Therefore, the diploma is very much a results-driven piece so that challenges that idea of real true freedom to try to experiment and find a different way because if it fails then you're in an accountability system which is a challenge, I think.

Interviewer: Then the last of these preliminary questions, looking at the IB Diploma Programme and kids who are exiting, how well do you feel they're prepared for university, one, academically and then two, at a social and emotional level?

Administrator3: Well, academically I think there's no doubt that kids are pretty well prepared. It's a rigorous course, they're taught to think critically, they're given opportunities to really think about how they learn and how they learn best and quite a bit of freedom to try to make that happen I think for most schools. Social-emotionally, again that's part of the community that challenges the program. So, if you put in advisory programs for kids, it's going to come out of somewhere. If you put in time with your counselors, it's got to come from somewhere.

There's only 180 days in a year, and assuming that you're going to actually give them lunch and a break in some other time, how do you fit those important parts of the program in? I think is a lot of schools' challenge right now. I think we do a pretty good job with our younger kids, and then the older they go the less we think it's important. We know it's not. Some of the core helps with that definitely and I think people are being creative and trying to engage them with some of those topics or TOK.

Then some of the classrooms especially literature based really continuing to try to get at the social-emotional learning. But again, those people, acquiring those people who really believe passionately about it because you also don't need to. So, that innovative piece that you're talking about, right? How do we bring it into our curriculum areas if we can't have the time to do it elsewhere?

Interviewer: In listening to you there are some of the things that you were sharing where the community time scheduling, you mentioned the idea of people who you hire who value it, those seem more school dependent contextually driven rather than necessarily components of the IB Diploma Programme. Is it fair to say that bringing that to life is more function of what the school is doing and how they interpret it rather than the IB Diploma of having a structural programmatic way of bringing that to life?

Administrator3: Yes, absolutely.

Interviewer: Okay. The focus of the second part of the interview is looking at what makes for a good education. For my purposes, what I've done is drawn upon, his name is Gert

Biesta. He's an educational philosopher, and he talks about the importance of a curriculum that-- Well, one of one of his terms is it's a pedagogy of disruption. Then another one of his terms is the idea of bringing to life subjectification.

It's an idea of getting a learner to truly take charge, to take ownership of his or her learning.

So, the questions are around that area looking at ways in which the IB Diploma Programme purposefully tries to bring that to life. So, the structural elements that the school puts in place but more so the program itself. For the first question, I guess it's technically a yes or no because it may not be the case, but if it is the case to what degree.

Within the IB Diploma Programme, to what degree are students able to become truly active and independent learners who have some degree of agency in their learning?

Administrator3: I think depending again on the school, there's a certain amount of choice. I feel that experience in itself, really getting into their passions and their interests is something that the Diploma does well. So, there are some really cool options for kids, and I think as kids are empowered through-- I think whatever you do earlier, they use those options better.

It becomes less traditional and more about their own interests and passions which is pretty cool. In terms of the program itself, in terms of agency, the Cooper and how they do-- especially CAS and Extended Essay also gives that. I think those are pretty cool options for kids and rounds out their ability to really take ownership over things that they care about and to create action, and to learn how-- through the Extended Essay really delve into something that they care about.

Again, do they do it just to take a box or do they do it to really think deeply about something right? That critical thinking is a school's journey in that. TOK, too, I think is an opportunity that many schools are using more and more for that journey and really getting into that opportunity for kids to explore things that they are really passionate about through the lens of knowing and understanding which is cool.

I think that the coursework itself, there's limited options. [chuckles] I guess the studying and how they organize themselves does but the time constraints and the amount of work limits.

Interviewer: Are the ways in which you're mentioning earlier the idea of the number of hours, the other things that needs to be engaged in, there's a bit of pressure there obviously. Those external measures of accountability, the exams essentially, to what degree do they hamper the IB Diplomas Programme to bring to life what it says should happen?

Administrator3: Yes, [laughs] I think that's the tension between really engaging kids and giving them room to explore their interests and push their thinking versus teaching to the test and making sure they're ready to be able to answer questions on an external exam. I don't know if you can ever get rid of that.

Interviewer: Does it strike a decent compromise? Does it lean a little more towards one side or the other? Overall, would you characterize it as a system that has accountability and a few drawbacks with it or is it pushing more towards the accountability at the expense of truly giving students agency?

Administrator3: Well, I think the more we learn and understand, [inaudible 00:17:13] and I think changing student that we have before us, it needs to move more the other way, the more towards students having more agency and choice and less imposed external pieces. I don't think it would be too hard, but I think that's again the trust that we've built these humans who love to learn rather than have to learn.

I think that there's just so much in the world of Education right now pointing to that being the key, and we have so much leeway and our younger students that's a shame to see it go away and we definitely hear our diploma kids say that, that they've had all this opportunity to explore things and we're looking at extending that. Then they get into the diploma and all that gets like, "Okay." You don't get to do that anymore because we have these exams and these

internal assessments that you have to prepare for. I think there is some, there still is too much of content and there still is too much drive to teach those exams.

Interviewer: Yes. One of the, I guess, key phrases the idea of pedagogy of disruption and purposely trying to take kids out of their comfort zone, engage them in learning experiences that are not unduly unsettling but sufficiently unsettling to get them to see the world in a different way and make them stand up and question themselves or what they had thought. Are there any ways in which the Diploma Programme does that by design?

Administrator3: I think TOK is a good way. That's one of the better-- Well, interesting parts TOK, the core and itself has an opportunity for kids and to push them into really rethinking things. Again, it depends on the courses they take and the teachers they have, but that idea of critical thinking and really understanding perspectives I think does ask them to look outside of their own belief system and values, from the whole-- I think which is why most of us are so passionate about the IB, their philosophy and lofty statements of what an education is all about does that.

Again, it's about the space and trust in our kids to be able to let them take that where they want to. So, I think it does, I think there are lots of opportunities for that. It's just whether we have enough time for them to truly do that, and truly step into their service project. They can explore those passions and get them started, but then a lot of them are like, "Okay, I don't have time to do this now. I have to go do this, so I'm just going to leave it there."

Especially for I think our middle to low kids. I would think the first years are too high. The high flyers? Absolutely, they do it all. They're playing on a team, and they're doing all these great things, and they're engaged in TOK, and they're writing these great articles. But the middle kids, the lower half, I think really struggle.

Interviewer: One of the aims of a good education I guess that I'm suggesting is in the-- or through the dissertation, is the idea of becoming critically aware of self, and critically aware of the community in or others. Are there ways in which the IB Diploma Programme is purposeful in terms of developing students to become self-reflective, or self-critical, or community reflective, or community critical?

Administrator3: Yes. Again, I would say that the CAS is one where they definitely have that opportunity. I think as they explore different subject areas, the opportunity is there. The concepts that you're talking about really starting in yourself, and then starting to move outwards really requires that you have a good sense of self, and you understand parts that come up with that, or part of you and who you are.

I feel that's probably whether you talk about the MYP or DP, I feel it's one of the weaknesses of the programs, because it's not really intentionally embedded. You could argue it is through the ATL's, but I don't know. Again, that's locked up for teachers to try to figure out if they want to, or can include some of those things, and whether the whole idea of explicitly teaching them is still hit or miss I think in many communities.

It's pretty hard to do the second part of that until you know the first part of it like, what makes a good community? How do we-- It assumes that you can do those parts. I don't know about whether the diploma actually engages kids in those conversation specifically or again, it's a function of the community that you take that diploma in.

Interviewer: For something like the approaches to learning, would it be the case if-- is it-- I'm trying not to answer for you. The IBDP, the exams are externally measured or marked, and then measured if you will. Is it because-- Would the approaches to learning be more valued if they were somehow tied into those accountability measures like the exams?

Administrator3: Well, I think what we know in external motivation is that those are skills that are really hard to measure, first off. Secondly, they're all based around internal motivation, and they're continuously developing through their life. You can talk to adults about the same skills, so it's not really something that somebody can master by the time

they're 17. The idea is that they become embedded in curriculum. Yes, in an idealistic school, I think they could be. It feels very much they are in the diploma. Particularly, they're kind of add-ons. Like, "Okay, we're doing it at PYP and MYP. Therefore, we're going to move them up to the diploma."

I feel like it's harder for communities to really get at the heart of those. Again, they're there and they're present, ever present, but do we actually teach them? How do we actually teach them, and which pedagogies help students to actually learn and develop those skills? Are those actually tied to knowledge and content? There's a lot of people out there that would say, you really can't develop those skills until you get the heart and soul of kids involved in their learning. Which means it's pretty hard to do when you're learning something, because you have to do it for a test.

Again, I think it comes back to the competencies of your teaching staff. Those teachers that can truly make curriculum the life for kids, and gauge in those kind of passionate conversations, and design learning experiences that enable them to develop those ATL's, magic. We have those in our communities, it's just-- That's a pretty high-end teaching skill. I don't know if that answered the question.

Interviewer: Yes, very much so. Then one of the goals is to get students to become self-aware, to become critically aware of communities as well, and then hopefully to do something with it. Within the Diploma Programme, are there structures in place? Are there purposefully designed avenues in place so the kids can actually act and make change, or bring to life and truly challenge that which they become aware of that might not be as it opts to be?

Administrator3: That's the heart of learning, is taking action using your understandings to push yourself, or to push others, or to push communities. I think that there's always opportunities within every subject area to do that. To develop that passion, and those understandings, and those tensions, and then support kids to create meaningful action within your community or outside of your community of themselves.

I guess we see that most often documented with CAS. Again, that's those parts in your community that aren't necessarily as measurable. How much do your kids feel like they belong to your community? When they see an injustice, so they'd be like, "Yes, whatever. That's just part of being in this community", or do they step up and use their skills and understandings to try to create that kind of change?

I don't think that that necessarily is something that comes from the Diploma Programme necessarily. It comes from all the other pieces of your school that create that level of awareness that it is possible to make a change, and that they have an obligation to really try to make their community and other communities safe and better. Yes, it's embedded in the philosophy, it's embedded in the structure of most of the courses.

But again, to enable that really good authentic action, it's about providing kids with those passions and that opportunity within the curriculum where they really feel like they care. Yes, I think it's there. Again, I think there's tension with time, and stress, and all of the other parts. Healthy communities, I think you see that. Schools were really are focusing on that empowering kids to do and to make that action authentic, it happens.

Interviewer: Then the last two connections, and they're somewhat connected. Within the Diploma Programme, to what degree are there purposely designed opportunities and expectations for kids to engage in higher order thinking skills? For kids to evaluate information, to analyze, to synthesize. To what degree is that something that's truly asked forth through the program itself?

Administrator3: This is a strength, I think, of the Diploma Programme as it setup. I think all courses ask students to do that. I think through their course selections, doesn't really matter which subject areas they choose that they are engaged in those higher-order thinking skills. I

think more so in the assessments, I guess, but also depending on how teachers design lessons to enable them to prepare to write those kind of final assessments that they have to have practice doing it. It is something that I think diploma kids as a whole are pretty good at those higher-order thinking skills.

Again, it's in the core. It's in their reflective ability. TOK is a good example of that. TOK is in my brain right now because we just did our presentations. When I listen to kids talk in our school, it blows my brain, there's no way I could have done that when I was at that age. There's no way I could have thought like that, wondered like that, drew in supporting details like that. It's pretty amazing what they can do.

Interviewer: You mentioned the idea of assessments within pretty much most subject areas they're expected. Any examples of how the assessments are expecting that? Are they framed in a certain way to bring that to life? What is it within each of the assessments that allows higher order thinking skills to come to life?

Administrator3: I think the design of them. I think it's, again, it's that expectations of the end piece and that they know that in the end they need to be able to show those higher-level thinking. That's part of the expectations on any of the assessments, that the kids are able to think within something that they're discussing or something that's unfamiliar and they have to be able to draw in evidence to support their reasoning and their thinking. They have to have multiple sources and they have to think about the validity of their sources. It's all tied into how assessments are structured.

Interviewer: Would you characterize them as perhaps being more open ended, each of the assessments?

Administrator3: I think some are. Yes, I guess you see more in IB diploma assessments that would require that kind of thinking than you would in a national system for sure. There's less knowledge-based assessments and more thinking-based. I wouldn't call them inquiry-based, but more a higher-level thinking, comparison, contrasting, trying to figure out novel solutions and ideas, depending on whether you're in the arts or design, does really ask kids to think differently, I think, and to wonder. Some subjects offer more of that, I think, than other subjects. The language-based subjects definitely lean more to that than some of the science subjects or math subjects.

Interviewer: Then the last question. Are there ways in which the Diploma Programme asks kids to use those higher-order thinking skills and then generate new knowledge? They're asking-- Are there new ways to evaluate and synthesize what was or is there an opportunity for them to present what could be or come up with new ways of, I guess, truly creating new knowledge?

Administrator3: Again, I go back to the core for that, I think it does provide opportunities in the core. I haven't seen enough internal assessments to know whether that can come out of the internal assessments that our kids write. Again, I think it would be depending on which subject. I think a lot of that comes on the opportunities, again, that you provide students to make change and to wonder and to explore different options.

We've seen a lot of kids that have studied other subjects because they're interested or gone away and looked at something and then gone to another subject area to find out what's related in that. I guess that there is opportunities for kids to tie in thinking and wonderings from things that they don't know or are wondering about. Again, I think it depends on the courses and the structure of those courses.

In design, we're starting to see kids come up with truly unique things where they're taking their knowledge and their understanding and trying to solve some bigger problem, whether it be in our community or in the lives of somebody, and they are thinking differently. It's not just taking another example.

Interviewer: For me, those are all my questions. Any questions you have for me in terms of any of this, in terms of use of the information, in terms of the questions themselves? Anything you want clarified or anything you want to-- a chance to clarify further?

Administrator3: Yes. I'm interested in your premise. Where are you headed with all of this?

Interviewer: I think the starting point was looking at what's going on in the US and the UK in terms of national educational systems with high degrees of accountability and looking at where that came from and how that came to emerge. That was the start of it. The longer answer is they got to the '70s in terms of economic reform in business and the privatization and neoliberal policy that filtered through the '80s with Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. It took 10 years to find its way into education. It pushed its way into high stakes testing as we come to see it in the UK or the US.

The goal isn't necessarily bad. They wanted to find ways that the use of resources, the most important thing we can do is educate our kids. How can we find accountability? I think lots of people have come to label the marketization of education a bad thing.

Fundamentally, you and I are working in privatized, marketized schools. I think the vast, vast, vast majority of educational research, it screams out against the marketization of education. I'm trying to find out the degree to which if you have the right product offered within an international school setting that private, could it actually function to serve the provision of a good education? Is it the case that the market is the problem or is it that--? I fundamentally think what I've come to realize or what I've come to research is that starting in the US and in the UK, they never had an end product in mind. They didn't start with the premise of what a good education should be. The market provided exactly what it wanted. They wanted a really quick and dirty way to provide educational results so that we can hold them accountable.

The easiest way to do that is to boil it down into a simple number on a simple standardized test. The end is testing if the IB Diploma Programme in international schools, it started with a better end in mind and it's looking at the development of a whole person. It's trying to bring some good things to life. Then actually testing, has it actually done any better?

In some ways, your teaching to a test might be a good thing if it's a decent test.

A few minutes ago, you mentioned the idea of the DP exam still aren't inquiry-driven. If they were or could they be more so, could we still find ways to hold schools accountable, but in healthier ways that end up producing a better product, I guess.

Administrator3: It's an interesting time in education because there's so much information out there available for kids. A lot of schools, including us, are looking at ways to give kids more time to do that, so we think, "Hey, what are you interested in? What would you like to learn? Here's some things that don't get covered in curriculum. You want to be that, or you want to do something else?" Giving that true agency back to kids a little bit.

I think the power of school is really about relationships. That idea of communities and how communities work and how we structure them and how we create that safe and inclusive environment. Those are things that you can't do if you're off-line, if you're not in those big places where we go to learn. I think that that's going to be interesting to see as we talk longer about what makes a good school, what makes a great learning experience for kids. Pretty much everything points against how we do it. So how do we actually embrace that and then is it possible to measure it? Is it possible to put numbers on it and how do kids get into the next level? Are there actually going to be universities in the 10 or 15 years? Do they need them anymore?

It's an interesting time to be in education, I think.

Interviewer: Yes, and so much I think of what we use to measure kids' ability to get into university isn't necessarily helping them to succeed in university. We're stuck in a circle if you will but it's hard to break out. It'll be interesting to see how we progress and how we

change. The other one and part of the research is also looking-- One of the big ideas from most educational research is the idea of market failures and markets fail in terms of providing education, but I think one of the things that many educational researchers look at is that government failure is just as prevalent.

So, the governments providing isn't the solution because if we go back to that, then we're back to Mr. Wilson, my 12th grade chemistry teacher who was an alcoholic never taught anything and he thought he was doing a wonderful job. It's tough. How do you strike a healthy compromise? We need those relationships.

Even the teachers who aren't doing well probably most of them think they're doing best, a few of us don't have good intentions. So, it's a tricky one. I think one of the things that I'm coming down to is, it might be something that has to be contextual. Schools and settings do the best that they can, and you need to find ways to trust in that and trying to extrapolate out to a national level or even a city-wide net level. It's a challenge that maybe we ought not to take.

Administrator3: Yes, agreed. I think also that we start to get into thinking about leadership and how impactful that is. Especially in our setting, is really interesting. That's where we go back to in one DP school and another DP school, they're contextually really completely different. You can't really measure that and when they come into schools, they can't really measure that because it's just a snapshot in time, right?

Appendix 5 – Interview Notes

Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning

External Assurance Present

“I think there's always some form of potential implicit bias when you're assessing your own students. I think the IBO has taken some good steps in terms of the quality assurance of the validity of the assessments by the examiners” (Administrator 2, 2020).

“There are definitely checks and balances. There's a system and a structure and it's organized in a way that allows us to look at the learning outcomes and objectives of the program. In that sense, whether it's the steps along the way over the two-year period or the external exams at the end, there is data and ways of looking at learning that are beneficial and create accountability, yes” (Administrator 1, 2020).

“Well, certainly, I think the exams are well done. They do provide that quality assurance that they are looking for there” (Teacher 1, 2020).

“Yes, definitely. It does ... you have the exams that are externally moderated, ...the internal assessment, ... their requirements of regular training of teachers so that there is, I would say, an effort to make sure that everybody has an understanding of what the program is about” (Teacher 3, 2020).

“The IB itself and the diploma itself is held accountable to external factors such as colleges, representations at government level, they validate all other things that is done within the IB, holds itself accountable and then that accountability is then passed on down to schools” (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

“I think it provides broad accountability” (DP Coordinator 3, 2020).

Accreditation is Not Thorough

“We have the accrediting agencies that give that a go yet as you and I know. Again, it's pretty flawed. We just got back our report and as you read through it, you're looking at it going the agencies came up sometimes with completely opposite results for the same visit, looking at the same data and talking to the same people” (Administrator 3, 2020).

“I think the reauthorization definitely is a paper-chase around that piece. Yes, I wouldn't say it is a quality control. If it is, it's the minimum. I see it more as, do you have the fundamentals in place in which to deliver the program?” (Administrator 2, 2020).

“There's authorization in the first place, but it seems to me that it's pretty easy to get authorized to do the Diploma Programme when we looked at some of the schools that are authorized” Teacher 2, 2020).

“The standards and the practices also force you as an institution to behave in line with the set of protocols that are set by IB and are accepted by all other schools. Part of that process is you become internally accountable rather than externally accountable to your own standard which needs to align with the IB. You set up your own mission, your own policies, and the IB accreditation forces you to implement those policies in alignment with the IB but they're in your own context” (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

Context Affects Quality

“I think that the quality control if that's were calling it, it definitely helps the perception that the program is equal no matter where you take it. I think the reality of that is still perhaps not as valid. I think and we know some schools here in Bucharest that have the same program and theoretically, the graduates would have the same experience, but I think that that's not necessarily true because context are different and experience with the people facilitating the program are different. I think they do the best job they can to try to have that happen” (Administrator 3, 2020).

“I think that there's more to school than exams. A student who does well in Physics in one school and the other school could have a really different experience in their educational journey and that's be differently prepared for life or university or whatever comes next for them. I think that's the part that has always driven schools because it's not necessarily always so measurable.

Exam results are somewhat measurable. It has the student learn the information that's in the syllabus and can they give it back to you. That's measurable but the learning experiences of those kids in those communities those learning communities, it's a little bit more challenging to measure because it's all-encompassing” (Administrator 3, 2020).

“The authorization program, I think is to put the key parts in place, but the real quality assurance is in the teacher” (Administrator 2, 2020).

“Again, I think the teacher-- In the ability to build relationships, I think that's the cloud that hovers over it” (Administrator 2, 2020).

Context is important and at the same time, “it's very easy for an IB teacher to pick up and move from one school to another school. That's always the easiest transition because the syllabus is the same, the expectations are the same, and you take the existing framework that you have, and you just adapt it to small things” (Teacher 3, 2020).

Growth Has Been an Issue

Growth of the program has affected the IB's ability to maintain quality (Administrator 3, 2020).

“I wonder and worry about the sheer growth of the IB and their ability to have enough qualified examiners” (Administrator 2, 2020).

Need More Transparency

“think what really should be in place is much stricter guidelines on rubrics to be able to inform teachers what a good assessment in each category looks like. I think that one of the biggest difficulties is actually most rubrics today have a lot of terms that aren't necessarily well-qualified, and a lot of students and parents somewhat rightly so say that there's too much of a degree of subjectivity when it comes to those rubrics” (Teacher 1, 2020).

Accountability Hinders Knowing Students, Differentiating Time Constraints

“I feel that that's probably one of the most frustrating parts of the Diploma Programme in that they have the hour constraints. As soon as you put those constraints and the amount of information that's in the syllabus, I feel it adds pressure to teachers and teachers feel they have to cup of content and as soon as that happens then that strains any relationship building

that you might try to do. As you know it impacts your scheduling and so then we're building a schedule not based on what's best for community and our kids but what's best for higher-level hours which is pretty frustrating.

Our schedule right now is under the amount of hours and then you're really putting teachers and kids under pressure for what I think are really good purposes, but a lot of our schools are small enough that our schedules are tied together and that creates to me unfair situations for kids and for teachers.

” (Administrator 3, 2020).

“I think the best teachers always find a way to know their kids. Some of that it's economic in terms of schools and how big your classes are and how many preps you can give people and all of those other kinds of pressures. I think the truly gifted teachers find ways to innovate and change but again we publish results, parents expect results, students expect results. Therefore, the diploma is very much a results-driven piece so that challenges that idea of real true freedom to try to experiment and find a different way because if it fails then you're in an accountability system which is a challenge I think” (Administrator 3, 2020).

“No. I don't find that limits me at all ... I think the biggest factors that impede a teacher's ability to help students on an individual basis and to differentiate are classes where you have a wide mixture of ability ranges and the class sizes” (Teacher 1, 2020).

“I feel hemmed in by the time. I don't think I feel hemmed in by anything else. I love the curriculum in history because there's so, so many options. It's really perspective at all. I can change it every year to suit the kids there in front of me if I wanted to and if I have time to prepare. But there again I could make it a lot more inquiry based depending on the kids that are in front of me as well. But the time, I just don't have the time to do it. The curriculum is far, far too big. In standard level it's not but at a higher level, it is. The depth that they require us to go in to is really limiting in terms of being able to innovate and to take risks, to be perfectly honest” (Teacher 2, 2020).

“I think that I can teach in the way that I want to meet the needs of, let's say, 95% of my students. I do think though that time factor comes up over and over again in most schools, so that's what makes it difficult” (Teacher 3, 2020).

“Yes, that is a big issue. In every school I've worked in, there's always been a lack of, not a lack of hours, but there's never been the required recommended number of hours for particularly teaching a higher level. I think teachers do feel under pressure then to just really say get through content, especially biology teachers, and maths, math high level. Then it tends to become lecture style very much” (DP Coordinator 1, 2020).

“The idea in the diploma the reality is it's still an exam-driven program. It's still a program with very significant content which you are prescribed to deliver. I mean, in some places, you have some flexibility and option, but the majority of that curriculum is externally derived. You have a very limited amount of time in which to do so. Even though philosophically it says the notion is that you have a lot of freedom in terms of how you deliver that, the reality is that that is very much constrained by time, exam, assessment” (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

“I think that the school sets up a lot of the culture of achievement and importance around the scores and kids and families and stuff too. It's not just teachers wanting the kids to do well. I think it's too hard for teachers sometimes to risk that” (DP Coordinator 3, 2020).

Limits Curricular Freedom

“It obviously eliminates curricular freedom. It is the ultimate teaching to the test and that's neither good nor bad. That's just is. If you're doing the program, you're accepting that” (Administrator 2, 2020).

“There's too much content to cover a normal two-year course makes it difficult for me to maybe teach all students as well as I would like to” (Teacher 3, 2020).

“I guess I would say, if there are limitations, they tend to be limitations from the school side of things rather than from the IB. I don't feel like there's anything that the IB particularly does that would make me say, "I can't or can't teach in a certain way." I would say it's limitations that are imposed by school structures that limit me more” (Teacher 3, 2020).

“I've come up against almost the opposite problem where the students worry about it so much, that if you try to go down an inquiry-based route, they get very nervous, and they feel as though they're not making the progress that they should” (DP Coordinator 1, 2020).

“I think we've become less innovative if we're pressured with time, but there is also the international nature of our students put some of that pressure on because they do come from different systems, particularly into the DP, where they are more used to a much more prescribed lesson, and a much more structured approach” (DP Coordinator 1, 2020).

Accountability Hinders Innovation

General

“You may know the quote from Grant Wiggins, which goes something like, "Standardized tests are no excuse for bad teaching." every system ... has its requirements and its external exams. Within those limitations, every teacher can be innovative” (Administrator 1, 2020).

“I don't believe that the two things are mutually exclusive. I don't think the fact that you have a time pressure and external exam pressure that everyone's been held to, that doesn't mean that you shouldn't be spending time getting to know your students and knowing them as learners and differentiate on their behalf. The reality is you rarely get to succeed with your end goal if you do that” (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

“Do I think it promotes innovation or limits innovation ... no. I would say that it limits innovation because there is a pressure around IB scores and grades, and jumping through certain hoops in order to provide the curriculum on mass to groups of students. It's difficult to customize or personalize the learning if everyone has to jump through the same hoops and takes the same exam at the end. Within that, the IB has created some of that flexibility. It attempts to look at learning beyond simply filling in boxes and answering short questions.

In that sense, it's looking for more critical thinking,

The pressures of university acceptance just on IB scores and following the parameters of every subject, is limiting and stifles innovation” (Administration 1, 2020).

“Quite the opposite. I think if it was just teacher talk, teacher talk, teacher talk, it'll be ineffective anyway ... it's not just a recall exam, it's not just a fact-based here, learn these facts, bring them back. Almost every exam you're talking about involves the manipulation of, the evaluation of, the discussion in relation to data and validity of things is, and those types of thinking can't be just drilled into a student under a time pressure, a didactic person at the front giving information” (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

Academically Prepared for University

Academically Prepared

“Well, academically I think there's no doubt that kids are pretty well prepared. It's a rigorous course, they're taught to think critically, they're given opportunities to really think about how they learn and how they learn best and quite a bit of freedom to try to make that happen” (Administrator 3, 2020).

“Academically, anecdotally, and it's over the years, even as a parent, almost to a student everyone says, “The first year of university is easier than the last year of IB.” I think that's a product of the academic rigor ... because the ability to analyze, write well, critically think is all there rather than regurgitation of fact, but I think even perhaps more so is time management” (Administrator 2, 2020).

“I think it does an excellent job because you hear anecdotally almost to our students, when they come back or report back, or my own kids for that matter, the first-year requirements of university was agreed maybe you had to do more rigorous things during the diploma program than they had to do writing an essay or research or all those kinds of things. It's a no brainer” (Administrator 1, 2020).

“Academically, I think they prepare kids very well” (Teacher 1, 2020).

“I know anecdotally from talking to my ex-students that they **rave** about the IB. I think there is a lot truth in the fact that it does prepare students well for further education” (Teacher 2, 2020).

It prepares them really well. First of all, because they do have to get a quite broad education so they're not specializing too early, so they're obtaining skills across a broad range of subjects, but I think the exams themselves in the courses are rigorous. They have exposure to having to do the higher-level thinking and having to manage quite a lot of coursework, having to take exams, and be responsible for two years' worth of material. A lot of those skills that they need in university are developed” (Teacher 3, 2020).

“That's one of the downfalls of the program is that the students don't realize themselves the true benefit of it until they reflect on it years later” (DP Coordinator 1, 2020).

“Very much, I think. Compared to other curricular, more than any other that I'm aware of because you are forced to do a whole host of higher-order thinking activities that will reflect what takes place in college” (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

“Really, really well” (DP Coordinator 3, 2020).

Socially Prepared for University

Not through the DP

“Social-emotionally, again that's part of the community that challenges the program. So, if you put in advisory programs for kids, it's going to come out of somewhere. If you put in time with your counselors, it's got to come from somewhere.” (Administrator 3, 2020).

The success here is a function of what the school in its local context brings to life (Administrator 3, 2020).

“As far as stress or social-emotional health, I don't think the IB addresses that at all. I don't see a direct correlation between the IB. I see a lot of stress from kids having to do the IB. In that sense, maybe you could say it prepares the kids for stress in university because they'd been in a stressful situation in high school, but I don't think there's anything in inbuilt or cut within the program that attempts to address that, that I'm aware of.

I think that the IB is very contradictory in that it often doesn't walk the talk of its own learner profile or its own mission. The profile in many ways or the mission of the IB is laudable, but the actual, it's not walking that talk” (Administrator 1, 2020).

“The IB talks a lot about the whole person but yet it's such a demanding program that it doesn't often give students the chance to be have a whole life [laughs] while they're actually in the program, but then again, when they're at university, I guess that kind of means they find University a lot less stressful” (Teacher 2, 2020).

“I think that maybe it also depends a little bit on how much that's carried out by the school as well” (Teacher 3, 2020).

By Virtue of Making It

“Social-emotionally, I guess because they're dealing with the academic rigor and go through it, there's some help. I mean, it's not easy, so you have that preparation” (Administrator 2, 2020).

“Socially and emotionally, I would say that's mixed. I think certainly, in terms of the degree to which there's an expectation that students self-manage, I think the IB Diploma, depending on the policies of the school that is running it, can do well to foster those things. I think a lot of that is dependent on the type of environment that the particular secondary school is providing as well as any advisory or pastoral care program” (Teacher 1, 2020).

“I think that's really difficult to answer because I think you can't really extract the diploma program from the school culture” ... I think it would be a hell of a leap to say, "If you've done the IB diploma, you're going to be more socially successful in college." (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

“Socially, emotionally when dealing with balancing difficult academic programs and academic work, great. I think the stress that kids feel of having to deal with high stakes things really helps them. I think in terms of their ability to relate to each other, I think the fact that inherently there is a cohort support mentality that goes through as kids go through together. I

think they know how to band together. I think they know how to work together” (DP Coordinator 3, 2020).

Just the Nature of International Kids

“In a system that's done well, I think they do have a more worldly view. Their scope's not as narrow, and I think that's beneficial. How it impacts them social-emotionally, I don't know. Again, it'd be hard for me to separate the fact that they're third culture kids coming from an international setting into what degree does them, having that worldly view, how much of that is being a third culture kid in an international school as part of the IB” (Administrator 2, 2020).

PART 2

Question 1 – To what degree does the IBDP educate students to be active, independent learners, who have agency in their learning?

Choice of Subject

“Well, certainly, just in terms of some of the basics – i.e. - course selection and what students are actually choosing to take and what they want to focus on, what they choose to select as their higher levels, I think that does give them some agency” (Teacher 1, 2020).

Choice of subjects and levels (Teacher 2, 2020).

Choice of subjects, IA work (DP Coordinator 1, 2020).

Context is Important

“I think depending again on the school, there's a certain amount of choice. I feel that experience in itself, really getting into their passions and their interests is something that the Diploma does well” (Administrator 3, 2020).

“I think a lot of it comes-- yes the IB provides the framework to allow for that, I think a lot of it comes down to the schools and the teachers” (Teacher 2, 2020).

Texts and resources teachers choose – they can involve students, but may not. This becomes problematic in a large school as you don't want a huge degree of difference as parents and students start to judge and compare and choose ... and we cannot manage this practically (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

Core is A Key Area for This

“especially CAS, ToK, and Extended Essay also gives that. I think those are pretty cool options for kids and rounds out their ability to really take ownership over things that they care about and to create action, and to learn how-- through the Extended Essay really delve into something that they care about” (Administrator 3, 2020).

“Certainly, in terms of an extended essay, that is fairly wide open in terms of what subject area the students can choose relatively speaking” (Teacher 1, 2020).

Core – EE and CAS (Teacher 3, 2020).

I do think CAS, they are forced for a very good reason to engage with communities and with people or events beyond their normal existence” (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

Coursework / Internal Assessment

“I think that the coursework itself, there's limited options” (Administrator 3, 2020).

“I mean, their curricular requirements in terms of whether it's developing their own experiments, the extended essay, the different parts that they have to do, they give the freedom to the students to do those things. I think within that realm, TOK, extended essay, they can follow a passion” (Administrator 2, 2020).

“Most of the curricula provide for some level of choice. You got some ability to move in one direction or another, but the choice is generally pretty limited” (Administrator 1, 2020).

“There are assessments within certain courses that I know do allow for student choice” (Teacher 1, 2020).

Coursework (Teacher 2, 2020).

“Specifically, in my subject, I would say one big aspect could be the IAs of the internal investigation. Students do have to be able to plan, carry out, and analyze data from an experiment that they've done on their own, and I think that if you're preparing them well to do that, that means that you're teaching them a lot of how to be independent and how to think on their own” (Teacher 3, 2020).

So Much Prescribed = Not Much Agency

“You're taking away student agency to some degree when you make so many requirements part of the IB Diploma Programme. Now, it feels to me like it's actually more prescribed than what the IB is asking for has the illusion of openness to some degree. I think it ends up being a lot more teacher-driven. I don't know if that's necessarily a good or bad thing, but I think that's probably what it ends up being” (Teacher 1, 2020).

“The fact that you have a prescribed curriculum is in some ways going to get in the way of taking control of their own learning because it means that if you have kids who are really interested in one particular area and I discovered that they were really interested in one part of physics, we might delve into that more deeply ... Those are things that we don't have time to do because, ultimately, there is that exam at the end. That's where the accountability piece gets in the way” (Teacher 3, 2020).

“I think sometimes it's a bit tokenistic. I think the biggest areas that kids have control over are the choices of courses that they take. I think once they take certain courses, it's very much acted upon them ... We've set up the game for them. We told them that, "You need to have certain grades to go to a good university” (DP Coordinator 3, 2020). Setting is everything ... this is not inherent in the IBDP.

Question 2 – To what degree does the IBDP expect and allow for learning experiences that are designed to disrupt and challenge students’ existing ways of being, thinking, and doing?

ToK & the Core

“Well, interesting parts TOK, the core and itself has an opportunity for kids and to push them into really rethinking things ... that idea of critical thinking and really understanding perspectives I think does ask them to look outside of their own belief system and values, from the whole” (Administrator 3, 2020).

It does in the Core and changes to CAS (moving away from hours) helps (Administrator 1, 2020).

“Well, certainly, I would say the TOK course does a long way to do that and certainly gives teachers an awful lot of freedom to do that, which is great” (Teacher 1, 2020).

ToK is the biggest way (DP Coordinator 1, 2020).

“That’s the whole point of ToK! And the Service element of CAS” (Teacher 2, 2020).

“reflection has been a huge part of the modern DP” (DP Coordinator 1, 2020).

“ToK and the Core” (DP Coordinator 3, 2020).

Depends on the Teacher

Again, it depends on the courses they take and the teachers they have” (Administrator 3, 2020).

“some of the literature that was chosen. I think if you truly, again, for our student body, if you truly-- the way I push kids out is not going with the traditional Western Caucasian authors” (Administrator 2, 2020).

“I mean, my own subject history, all the time, people have got a very-- kids tend to come into history, even if they've been studying it in ninth and 10th grade thinking that history is just a study of the past and that there's just one story to be told and they often don't understand that there's lots of different versions of history. It's written into the rubrics, it's clearly in the documentation that we have to look at it through different perspectives” (Teacher 2, 2020).

“There's the ability for teachers to put it into place by making TOK connections, for example, but if we go back to that accountability piece, that ends up being very teacher dependent” (Teacher 3, 2020). This is not assessed, so not all do it.

“I think it very much depends on the teacher” (DP Coordinator 3, 2020).

Assessment Criteria

“One of the criteria in something like the further oral activity was an analysis of the connection between language and meaning and its significance, looking at how in fact, yes, there is assumptions being made in this text or even how certain characters are written with particular accents” (Teacher 1, 2020).

Rigour & Breadth Stretches Kids

“I think given the nature of the rigor, given the fact that in its purest form you're teaching through university-level classes, it's going to push limits. We've certainly seen kids over time who just kind of breeze through Grades 1 through 10 and they hit 11 and 12 and they're

finally like, "Oh," and a lot of them, and my daughter included, was like, "Okay, I'm ready for this challenge" (Administrator 2, 2020).

"I think the fact that it's global in the sense of you're touching all disciplines, I think allows it to do that because you are going to have kids who may be more humanities kids or more math science kids. I think by expecting high things for them in all areas, I think it does that" (Administrator 2, 2020).

Not Really

"Pretty limited. I don't see lots of opportunities for that in the IB. Again, it gets back to the agency question, because the more that kids can be given the opportunity to be autonomous learners, the more they can be put in position to be challenged and to challenge themselves, but I don't see a lot of that. As I said, it's within limited means.

Depends on the subject, but the way the IB is structured, it's overall intention from as far as I can tell, is not to do that" (Administrator 1, 2020).

"I think the exam is a big stumbling block for a lot of this" as many of the questions are still closed ended (DP Coordinator 3, 2020).

Question 3 & 4 – To what degree does the IBDP educate students to be critically aware and reflective as a learner?

Present in the Core

"I would say that the CAS is one where they definitely have that opportunity ... they're kind of add-ons. I feel like it's harder for communities to really get at the heart of those. Again, they're there and they're present, ever present, but do we actually teach them? How do we actually teach them, and which pedagogies help students to actually learn and develop those skills? Are those actually tied to knowledge and content? But again, to enable that really good authentic action, it's about providing kids with those passions and that opportunity within the curriculum where they really feel like they care. Yes, I think it's there. Again, I think there's tension with time, and stress, and all of the other parts" (Administrator 3, 2020).

Definitely in the Core, and particularly ToK (Teacher 1, 2020).

EE, ToK, and CAS (Teacher 3, 2020).

Core (DP Coordinator 2, 2020)

"I think, in all subjects, there is a concerted effort by the IB to bring that TOK approach into all the subject areas. You can't find a guide or a textbook now even in math that doesn't have something that provokes the teacher to engage with that notion of knowledge beyond just their subject, the idea that you learn this stuff" (DP Coordinator 2, 2020). But ... is it valued? It is no assessed. "I think it's always a place of tension because I think most of your teachers are happy going through the curriculum and delivering and going to the exam. Some, it's easy to fall into the trap of just TOKs and other checkbox I need to do"

Context & Teacher Dependent

"Yes, it's embedded in the philosophy, it's embedded in the structure of most of the courses ... but again, I think it comes back to the competencies of your teaching staff. Those teachers

that can truly make curriculum the life for kids, and gauge in those kind of passionate conversations, and design learning experiences that enable them to develop those [skills], magic” (Administrator 3, 2020).

“I think it gets in their way; I don’t think it provides any of those things. I think an international school, true international school that is focused on, call it international-mindedness and intercultural understanding and all of the laudable things that the IB and schools are trying to achieve, I think those things are achieved because of how the school is structured not because of the IB” (Administrator 1, 2020).

“I think there's also an element of awareness. There's also an element of not knowing what TOK can bring to your subject, not knowing how it can help you and not just be a hoop to jump through, or a hurdle to get over, or a checkbox you need to put into your curriculum online and say, yes, I've addressed TOK here. I think there's a responsibility there for people like me in the school administration to sort of bring teachers onboard and try and get them to realize that they're not in a silo. They're not in their own little bunker of physics. That there is a whole host of wider knowledge implications that need to be considered and brought. TOK can do those things” (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

“Whether school environments and the way they deliver the DP facilitate that is, I would imagine, immensely variable. It depends very much in your school setting. If you imagine, speaking from this context as an example, so we have 200 DP students a year, so we have 400 students in the diploma program at any given moment. The scope and freedom for the individualization of program and the ability of individual student choice agency engagement of whatever that might be in terms of challenging is diminished as just as a function of scale” (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

Question 5 – To what degree does the IDBP expect, empower and provide opportunities for students to actively challenge and improve themselves and their communities as a result of their critical analysis and reflection?

Theory Versus Practice

“Again, I'm going to be critical in this one in that I think they pay lip service to it, but they don't allow the space for it” (Administrator 2, 2020).

“I think the biggest opportunity is around CAS, depending on how the school treats it because there the kids can have a lot the choice in what they want to pursue and that can have, if done well, a profound change on them and on the community. I think that's primarily where you'll see it. I don't think you'll see it anywhere else that I'm aware of.

I think there's theoretical aspects of other parts. You can maybe see it in Extended Essay or TLK, to some extent. That's more internalized. In terms of an external impact, I think it comes out in CAS” (Administrator 1, 2020).

“Well, my brief time as a CAS coordinator, there were certainly things that students I think were invited to do or that the CAS program left open for kids to do. I sometimes think that if the IB Diploma Programme wanted students to be more purposeful about the actual making change part, they would perhaps structure the CAS program a little bit differently ... but it's unfortunate that I find a lot of students fall into a trap of simply trying to tick boxes that it

becomes something that on their IB Diploma Programme, they know they have to complete” (Teacher 1, 2020).

CAS (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

“I think the ideal is yes they expect. I think the gap is getting the skills for kids so that they can do it. The difference between coming up with an understanding of what a solution is and putting it into action, I think there's a gap there. I think that's an area that the DP doesn't have yet. I think schools fill that gap, and I think there is all sorts of leadership program training, I think there are CAS coordinators who are doing this mentorship. I think the individual teacher sponsors do a lot of that work necessarily, but I think it's something that the DP expects and sets out as an ideal and encourages, but I don't think that they necessarily fill the gap that the skills needed” (DP Coordinator 3, 2020).

Question 6 – To what degree does the IBDP expect, empower and provide opportunities for students to engage in higher order thinking skills such as evaluation, analysis, and synthesis?

Real Strength

“This is a strength, I think, of the Diploma Programme as it setup. I think all courses ask students to do that ... doesn't really matter which subject areas they choose that they are engaged in those higher-order thinking skills. I think it's, again, it's that expectations of the end piece and that they know that in the end they need to be able to show those higher-level thinking. There's less knowledge-based assessments and more thinking-based.” (Administrator 3, 2020).

“I think that's the strongest point. I've seen that across the table in many areas, in all disciplines. Again, as it's laid out, if you're going to do well-- I think the assessments in themselves, I think, expect that. Unlike perhaps other high school exam programs, they give the time to do it. You have this time here. Six questions, pick two. What they're asking you to do-- I think in that sense not only are they teaching that way, not only do they do the training expect that of teachers, but I think their assessments are backing that up” (Administrator 2, 2020).

Strongly present in the Core (Administrator 2, 2020).

“Yes, very much so ... it's in the rubrics. At my own subject, it's very much about looking at different perspectives and evaluating those perspectives and talking about the values and limitations of them. It's always about that. It's really integral to the way that the subject is taught. It's really university-level thinking, actually. It's beyond anything that is done at A-level in the UK and beyond anything that I've ever heard of it being done in US schools” (Teacher 2, 2020).

“I think the program has some aspects of that absolutely. There is an intention to try to do that.” (Administrator 1, 2020).

“I'm trying to get my kids to not view me as the source of knowledge but to construct their knowledge from what we're doing in class. That fundamentally fits in with TOK of how do we know what we know. It shouldn't be because your teacher told me ... I do try to bring

those. Then, there are other times when I ignore TOK quite a bit. Maybe if I had more time, I would probably think about it a little bit more” (Teacher 3, 2020).

“The focus is not on rote learning. The focus is not on memorization of names, dates, facts, et cetera ... it's absolutely asking for those higher order thinking. Indeed, in TOK, it's built into the rubric, it's what gets you those higher levels just to demonstrate that” (Teacher 1, 2020).

“Certainly, there's an awful lot of students that I know come through the Diploma Programme that do have I think their eyes opened in a lot of ways and do end up being critical thinkers. "It was later that I realized what my education and what your classes had done for me. I was able to listen to what people were saying and really think about whether or not I thought it was right." It's great when you hear stories like that and I don't think in the IB Programme, they're all that rare” (Teacher 1, 2020).

“It's not just rote memorization, it is that deeper level of thinking and being able to apply knowledge to new situations” (Teacher 3, 2020).

“When you say things like evaluating and analyzing, I feel like that's a huge component of what we do in science. The IAs certainly gets students to a higher order of thinking. They might not be creating new knowledge, but certainly, for some of their projects, they're taking scenarios where there isn't necessarily a right answer out there and trying to make sense of it” (Teacher 3, 2020).

“It's part of the IA. It's part of paper three, and now it's built-in their other subjects” (DP Coordinator 1, 2020).

“I think it's pretty clear when you look at any of the assessments for the diploma, you can't really succeed at a very high level. You can get through, but you can't succeed at a high level without some of those higher-order thinking skills” (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

“Everything about it is this idea of constructivism towards inquiry and agency and the idea of evaluation and analysis. So, it might be discussed, and I think it's very clear, it's not just a curriculum, it is a pedagogical methodology, it is an educational philosophy, and those two things are very clearly placed upon the teacher as an expectation” (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

“I think it's been really effective in terms of the work kids do in their classes ... the IA I think is an incredibly difficult higher-order thinking thing. It takes months for the kids to come around to. It's not something that you can just simply give them a topic and have them run and go through it. It takes time and the acquiring of specific skills that they have to direct.” (DP Coordinator 3, 2020).

Limits it too

“Usually, it depends on the teacher because if you're just jumping through the hoops and following the script, you're not going to get at that. If it's all about how do I get a seven on the IB? If that's the driver, then it'll limit the amount of critical thinking and so on. You can get a seven without going very far beyond the boundaries. It's this concept of form follows function. I think the design is driving the end result, so it's driving the students, it's driving the teachers, it's driving the examiners because they're all working towards the outcome of the design of the program” (Administrator 1, 2020).

“As soon as you refer to the idea of a test, you’re referring to something that is pretty static. While the IB may tweak its exam every year, it’s potentially a static exam that it is applying to tens of thousands of students. Their school and learning requires a nimbleness that a program like the IB will never be able to deliver because it is kept safe. If the IB were deconstructed or redesigned or transformed, it would be a lot more nimble and agile, it would be a lot more flexible, it would have much broader parameters and criteria that would meet the needs of each individual learner” (Administrator 1, 2020).

“I think sometimes, because it's marks-driven, it's unfortunate that students end up looking for the shortcuts to simply what would be indications of that, rather than it being the genuine article in terms of thinking” (Teacher 1, 2020).

“There's a whole bunch of requirements being met for the exams. The thing has to be an hour and a half. It has to be an hour and 20 minutes. It has to be able to be graded within this amount of time for examiners to get it back. It has to have all these different component parts. It's got to hit the syllabus from all these areas. I think they box themselves in a little bit in terms of what can be done. I also think that the more higher-order thinking skills you do, sometimes the harder it is to examine and standardize. I'm not saying none are being done and that's not fair. I think that there are some things that are able to be done well, but then there's more ambiguity in the marking” (DP Coordinator 3, 2020).

Question 7 – To what degree does the IBDP expect, empower and provide opportunities for students to create knowledge as a result of their evaluation, analysis, and synthesis?

“Again, I go back to the core for that, I think it does provide opportunities in the core” (Administrator 3, 2020).

“I think certain subjects in their design” – Arts, Literature, and Humanities, less so Math and Science (Administrator 2, 2020).

Extended essay (Teacher 1, 2020; Teacher 2, 2020).

Extended essay (DP Coordinator 1, 2020).

EE Example of the relationship between Mao and Tito, which is one that isn’t really studied (Teacher 2, 2020). Contrasted with ... “I Quite imagine a lot of the history teachers say, "No, you can't do that, it's way too complicated” (Teacher 2, 2020).

“The point that what's new and novel for an 18-year-old might not be for them but look, that doesn't mean it's not new and novel for them in their world. If it gets them questioning and looking at things a different way and pushing them into deeper critical thought, all the better” (Teacher 1, 2020).

“They really actually start to understand, how do we learn? What are the different ways? That idea of metacognition. I think the artist's notebook, for example, really makes their thinking visible and then ask them to reflect on that. This is what you did here, now you're doing this, how did that change, and why did that change?” (Administrator 2, 2020).

“Every class has some component that allows for some of that knowledge creation some more areas more than others but it’s intentionally in the design of the IB, but I would posit that that’s a very small component of the IB. It’s not a major feature of the IB” (Administrator 1, 2020).

ToK very much (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

EE – your research question (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

“I think that there's been a movement away as well, from bulk IA's. In the past where everyone would do the same thing, and do their own interpretation, now almost every subject, certainly in the sciences and the social sciences now, kids have to do their own investigation, is has to be far more personalized than it was. it's not creating a new theory of relativity, but they are doing things that are independent and individual and taking them beyond the other class members or community members, so in that case, yes” (DP Coordinator 2, 2020).

“I think that's the intention for most of the culminating work that kids have to do for their IEAs. A lot of the classwork is that about acquiring knowledge across a broad range and then about synthesizing it and then applying it in a specific area. I think the work that kids are producing for their final IEAs, a lot of that has that ability to create that new knowledge for themselves” (DP Coordinator 3, 2020).

“I guess is that it's really hard to shift people's beliefs. We had a lot of teachers that have come from all over the world, and they've taught in successful DP programs. Having them come in, and then telling them things don't matter to us, that they have such an ingrained experience that do matter, is real